MAN AND HIS SEVEN PRINCIPLES

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HUMAN NATURE
THE ETERNAL TRUTHS OF LIFE
LOOK AT YOUR KARMA

MAN AND HIS SEVEN PRINCIPLES

BY

ARTHUR ROBSON

1973

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PREFACE

THE greater part of this book was published as articles in *The Theosophist* between May 1960 and December 1964. The chapter "All That Makes a Man" appeared as an article in *The American Theosophist* in January 1966. Only the chapter "Man in the Making" has not been published hitherto.

I had a stroke in December 1965 which completely paralysed my right side and caused an impediment in speech. I was treated at The West Middlesex Hospital, Isleworth, and later attended the rehabilitation centre at Green Lane, Hanwell, for six weeks. I met with every care from the doctors, sisters, nurses and the staff and I may say that I have considerably improved, but since I had the stroke I have penned only this Preface. It is due to the kindness and compassionate help of Miss Nellie Smedley, the Secretary of the Ealing Centre of The Theosophical Society, that the typescript of this book was assembled and arranged for publication. Some time before I had the stroke, seeing that I was contributing articles to *The Theosophist*, she had asked me if I was writing another book, and I had answered, "Yes". So when the stroke occurred, she seems to have had in mind the *un*published book, though I myself thought it was beyond hope. She adverted to it in 1968, but there were so many things that I should have had to see to first in getting the typescript together. However she promised to see to that. She put together the typescript, with such help as I could give, and sent it to Adyar. And, during the negotiations that preceded the acceptance of the book for publication I have always had her advice and willing help.

I lay great emphasis in the first chapter, " The Seven Principles of Man ", on the teaching of the Masters. H. P. B. has written in *The Secret Doctrine* (3rd ed., I, 181):—

> **But as it is a question of simple choice and expediency, we hold in this work to the time-honoured classification of the Trans-Himalayan Arhat Esoteric School.**

Further on she writes (3rd ed., II, 627, footnote):—

> **But for practical occult teaching our septenary division is the best and easiest.**

In other words, the septenary division given by the Trans-Himalayan Masters is, as far as she is concerned, the *definitive* classification.

I very much regret that I have been unable to divide the text of this book into convenient sub-sections, with appropriate subtitles, which would make for easier reading, (as I have done in my other books, *Human Nature*, *The Eternal Truths of Life* and *Look at Your Karma*), but have published the articles as they appeared in *The Theosophist.*

But my chief regret has been that I have been unable to compile a GLOSSARY and INDEX as I did for *The Eternal Truths of Life.* Perhaps, if this book should ever run to a second edition, someone else will do so, and merit my grateful benediction.

ARTHUR ROBSON

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ABBREVIATIONS

ML for *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*
SD for *The Secret Doctrine*
IU for *ISIS UNVEILED*.

CHAPTER I

THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF MAN

According to the Teaching of the Masters

In *Isis Unveiled*, which was published in 1877, H. P. Blavatsky emphasized that, whereas it was commonly believed that Man consisted of body and soul only, in truth he consisted of body, soul and spirit—three separate and distinct parts.

> Man is a little world—a microcosm inside the great universe. Like a foetus, he is suspended, by all his *three* spirits in the matrix of the macrocosmos; and while his terrestrial body is in constant sympathy with its parent earth, his astral soul lives in unison with the sidereal *anima mundi.* He is in it, as it is in him, for the world-pervading element fills all space, and *is* space itself, only shoreless and infinite. As to his third spirit, the divine, what is it but an infinitesimal ray, one of the countless radiations proceeding directly from the Highest Cause—the Spiritual Light of the World?
>
> *Isis Unveiled,* I, 212.

She quotes several authorities in support of this teaching, among others St. Paul himself.

> In the writings of Paul, the entity of man is divided into a triune—flesh, psychical existence or *soul,* and the overshadowing and at the same time interior entity or SPIRIT. His phraseology is very definite, when he teaches the *anaestasis,* or the continuation of life of those who have died. He maintains that there is a *psychical body* which is sown in the corruptible, and a spiritual body that is raised,

in incorruptible substance. "The first man is of the earth earthy, the second man from heaven."

Isis Unveiled, **II, 281-2.**

But in *The Theosophist* of October 1881, there appeared the first of a series of articles entitled "Fragments of Occult Truth" in which Man was described as consisting of seven principles. The first three articles of this series were unsigned, but we find that the Master K. H., in two letters to A. O. Hume, speaks of "your Fragments" (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett,* pp. 63, 90) and, in a letter to A. P. Sinnett writes, "as Mr. Hume crudely puts it in his Fragments" (p. 174). This would seem to put it beyond doubt that t Fragments were written by Hume. And yet in a later lett to Sinnett the same Master writes, "Your Fragments" (p. 348).

The inconsistency, however, is only apparent. In another letter to Mr. Sinnett He writes:

> **If you would give pleasure to your trans-Himalayan friend, do not suffer any month to pass without a *Fragment*, long or short, for the magazine, and then, issuing it as a pamphlet—since you so call it. You may sign them as "A Lay-Chela of K. H.," or in any way you choose. I dare not ask the same favour of Mr. Hume, who has already done more than his share in another direction. (p. 115).**

As a result there appeared in *The Theosophist* in October and November 1882, and March, April, and May 1883, Fragments IV to VIII, by "A Lay Chela". These appeared again in print without much alteration as Chapters III, IV, V, VII and VIII of A. P. Sinnett's *Esoteric Buddhism,* which was published in June 1883. A review of this book appeared in *Light* and was reprinted in *The Theosophist* of August 1883, connecting filaments to others, making them alive and, so, reconstructing the parts associated with them, thus making the picture so much the fuller.

This theory does seem to explain redintegration. But its implications are that the cell appropriated to, say, the sound of any letter of the alphabet has become linked by nerve filaments with everything connected in any way with any of the thousands of words one has ever used in which that letter occurs. So there would be millions of filaments radiating from that cell alone; and, altogether, millions of millions of billions of connecting filaments in the brain. Is that possible?

The theory, moreover, does *not* explain another phenomenon which bears so striking a resemblance to redintegration and memory that it must be regarded as basically one and the same thing. A thinker, in discovering a truth *hitherto unknown to him*, does so in the same way as one brings an old memory on to the mental screen. Pieces of the picture show up on the screen at odd times disconnectedly and lacking definition. Then, often quite suddenly, they arrange themselves to make a clear picture, bringing with it a firm conviction in the discoverer's mind that it is what he was after, although he may at first be unable to see the line of reasoning leading up to it.

Now it cannot be said that the various parts of the picture have been brought on to the screen of consciousness by way of connecting filaments between cells in his brain cortex, because this is the first time it has ever appeared in his consciousness. No, the theory of appropriated cells and connecting filaments between them is not at all convincing as an explanation of redintegration any more than that of micrographs in the cerebral ganglia.

But there is a passage in *Isis Unveiled* (I, 282) that suggests what the true explanation is:

> **By the radiant light of the universal magnetic ocean, whose electric waves bind the cosmos together, and in their ceaseless motion penetrate every atom and molecule of the boundless creation, the disciples of mesmerism—howbeit insufficient their various experiments—intuitionally perceive the alpha and omega of the great mystery. Alone, the study of this agent, which is the divine breath, can unlock the secrets of psychology and physiology, of cosmical and spiritual phenomena.**

"This agent" is, of course, Ākāsha. The all-important word is "waves". It is only a knowledge of the exact nature of the waves or pulsations of Ākāsha that will unlock the secret of redintegration of memory. For one thing, in the wave theory we have a perfectly sound explanation of the linkage between the different parts of a thought picture, and do not have to assume that there must be physical connecting links of some kind between the separate brain cells concerned in the thought (if indeed the theory of there being a brain cell appropriated to each atom of thinking has any basis at all in fact).

The wave motions of an electron, which is probably the closest approximation to an atom of Ākāsha that we know of, can be a complex combination of many and quite diverse wave motions. We do not need to depend entirely on our imagination for a concept of this. When we listen to a gramophone record of an opera, we hear many voices and instruments together and probably regard the various sounds as proceeding from different sources and may even think of them vaguely as reaching the consciousness through different channels. But there is only the one quivering needle-point that is producing all those sounds simultaneously. The motions of that point, traced for it on the plastic material of the record in making it, would be found to be a combination of a large number of waves, making up a complex, composite wave. And all the sounds reach the brain by way of the same ear mechanism, the vibrations of the ear drum being also highly complex. Some idea of the movements of the needle-point and eardrum may be had by watching the intricate bobbings of a cork on the surface of a pond on which there is a play of wavelets from different directions, started by winds and children paddling.

There can be no doubt that in making a thought picture, the mind, which is a vibratory or wave-making instrument like the harp, sets up a complex, composite wave motion in Ākāsha. The different elements making up the thought—and it may be said that even our ordinary thoughts are quite complex—correspond to the various notes which, sounded together and in sequence, make up the passage played on the harp.

Now in order to make a tape-recording of that passage it was necessary to have a recorder, a blank tape, and a supply of electricity; and then there was all the business of getting them properly hitched up and of setting the necessary controls to start the recording. But the ākāshic recording of a thought is automatic and instantaneous.

Furthermore, in order to get a playback of the tape-recording one has to alter the controls, rewind, and set the controls for the playback. But getting a playback from an ākāshic recording is a far simpler matter. The mind, by producing any part of a thought picture recorded in Ākāsha, causes it to play back. It is as if the harpist, by playing any note, chord or phrase in the recording thereby started a playback of the whole recording. If the strings of the mind-harp which made the original picture are still resilient, they respond to the playback and, in doing so, reconstruct the rest of it to make a fuller picture. The linkage between the different elements of the thought picture consists in the ākāshic waves created by them separately having combined to make a composite wave.

The mind is all the time evoking playbacks from ākāshic recordings and reconstructing thought pictures in this way, because in all mental activity memory takes an important part. "All comparison, judgment, even ordinary perception evidently involve memory." Noticing a robin singing in a hedge, to stake out a claim to it, quite obviously involves remembering that a bird of the size, shape and colors of the one observed is a robin, and that its singing has been declared by naturalists to be a proclamation of its territorial claim.

The mind has no difficulty in responding to the playback of a recent thought, but when it is one that the mind "played" some time ago, the strings concerned may in the interval have lost their resilience and become dead. Or it may be that one or two of them respond while others do not. But the mind can, by twanging loud and repeatedly the strings which *do* respond, get the others in due course to do so also.

What undoubtedly happens is this: the twanging of some strings causes the whole recording to go on playing back, including those notes which had not hitherto stirred any response in the strings attuned to them. But the vibrations playing on any one of the latter, being of the same frequency as its own, make it vibrate with increasing force until in time it is sufficient to constitute consciousness, the principle being the same as that behind a well-known army regulation requiring a column on the march to break step when crossing a bridge, the idea being that if the rhythm of the march is attuned to the bridge, it will cause it to vibrate with increasing force until it ultimately snaps—if the column is long enough.

We are now in a better position to examine the other phenomenon mentioned earlier: a thinker discovering piecemeal a truth hitherto unknown to him, the pieces coming to him at unexpected moments. It has probably already occurred to the reader that if an ākāshic recording can, by playing back into the mind that made it, cause it to reconstruct the original picture, it should be able to do so for any other mind. The playback of a harp recording will induce not only that harp to play the piece in response, but any other harp as well, provided the other harp has strings attuned to the notes in the recording.

Of course, it is not only by the playback of the recording that the sounding of the notes can be induced in the responding harp. If two harps are attuned to each other and near enough, anything played on one will, by the medium of air vibrations, cause the other to play in sympathy. In the same way the thinking of a thought by one mind will, by the medium of ākāshic vibrations, cause another mind attuned to thinking of that kind to think the same thought, proximity of the two minds being an aiding factor. Telepathy. It is thus that two people sympathetically attuned, e.g., a husband and wife who have been married for some time, readily divine each other's thoughts, sense each other's feelings. Telepathy almost certainly explains why it has so often happened that great discoveries have been made simultaneously by two people who have not communicated with each other on the subject in the normal way through the medium of language. For example:

> **Some years later, when Newton's method of fluxions was published, another and a worse controversy arose—this time with Leibnitz, who had also independently invented the differential calculus.**

> It was not so well recognized then how frequently it happens that two men independently and unknowingly work at the very same thing at the same time. The history of science is now full of such instances; but then the friends of each accused the other of plagiarism.
>
> Oliver Lodge, *Pioneers of Science*, p. 197.

Either Newton or Leibnitz had been unwittingly picking the other's brains, depending on which of them thought out the calculus first. But even he was picking the brains of thinkers of long ago, so long ago that history knows nothing of them or even of the age when they flourished. Goethe has said: " Alles Gescheite ist schon gedacht worden; man muss nur versuchen, es noch einmal zu denken." No thinking that man ever does vanishes into nothingness as soon as the thinking ceases. It all lives on in the universal *Gedächtnis*. This is not a poetic fiction, but a factual reality, something that has objective existence in Ākāsha. It constitutes the Universal Buddhi, of which the Master K. H. has written:

> . . . the Universal *Buddhi* . . . is the synthetic aggregation of all the Dhyan Chohans, as of all other intelligences whether great or small, that ever were, are, or will be.
>
> *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, 2nd ed., p. 343-4.

In a series of reflections of it there is also a gradation of lesser Buddhis: that of our Earth as a whole, that of an entire ethnic stock such as the Āryan, that of a race such as the Anglo-Saxon, that of a class, a profession, an organization—in which is preserved its collective thinking, its genius, its culture.

The series ends in one's individual, personal Buddhi, the Ākāsha over one's head, in which all the thoughts that have ever been in one's mind, all that one has ever known in this life or any other " in the dark backward and abysm of time," still live on. One may consciously remember little of it, the remainder having evoked no vibrations in the appropriate strings in one's Manas in this life. But it still lives on as one's *potential*. As such it is imperishable and is carried by one from incarnation to incarnation. Just as, by re-reading a few times that forgotten ode from Horace, one can again become word perfect in it, so one can readily take in and remember a truth, well known to one in the forgotten past, when it again comes within one's purview in the present.

In this we have the obvious explanation for the natural tendency, the readiness—varying so immensely as between any two people—to take in, and so to remember, anything that comes within the purview of both of them.

> **It is abundantly plain that memory as it occurs in ordinary life is a very complex phenomenon: whether an experience will be retained in memory or not depends often upon the whole previous life-history of the individual concerned.**
>
> **Mellone and Drummond, *Elements of Psychology*, p. 363.**

Surely an understatement! Not "often," but *always*. The authors' hesitancy was undoubtedly due to their being unable to close their eyes to the fact that in so many cases there seems to be so little "previous life-history" to justify it, it being well known that very young children, in whom there is so tiny a margin of life-history to depend on, show a remarkable readiness to observe, and facility in remembering, experiences in some particular field of life which are neither observed nor remembered by others. And to the fact that two brothers with exactly the same life-history often show a great difference in this respect. The difference can indeed be so great as to make it plain that the more backward of the two could not, even with a lifetime of training, acquire the same acumen as his brother in that field. If the truth were known, it would take him many, *many* lifetimes. He realizes this only too well when he makes the effort whole-heartedly and in all sincerity, and begins to have a sense of his brother's acumen, which so many people dismiss so lightly as due to some influence in childhood. It is only on the basis of *continuity of being through a long succession of lives*—far longer even than most of us would dare to guess: countless millions of years—that a satisfactory explanation of all this is to be had.

But the more intelligent of the two brothers has himself a lot to learn. Not every piece of newly displayed understanding is necessarily old understanding revived. As one evolves, one goes on creating fresh strings capable of responding to fresh thinking coming from a greater Buddhi. But one does so by way of one's own personal Buddhi. Darwin, in discovering the truth of Evolution of Form may have been merely reviving knowledge possessed by him in some past life. On the other hand it may have been something new for him. Even so, he certainly had most of the requisite strings and needed to evolve just one or two more to complete the range required to play the new piece. But the process of evolving the new strings necessary to provide a coherent picture—if I may mix my metaphors—is a slow and arduous one, extending, maybe, over many years, which explains why the discovery is made so painfully and so slowly with, for a long time, a disquieting gap, which must be filled before the picture can be complete.

Darwin's having evolved new strings for his own mind-harp, thus making it possible for an understanding of Evolution to become part of his Buddhi, opens the way to making Evolution a matter well understood by his people and, through them, by all humanity, thus making it part of the national Buddhi and then the global Buddhi. The intercourse between any individual Buddhi and a collective one is two-way: the greater may profit from the lesser just as the lesser more commonly profits from the greater.

Upon how extensive the range of notes in all one's Buddhic recordings is, and how many strings on one's mānasic harp are kept resilient, depends how good one's memory is. The Master K. H. has said: " I never forget what I once see or read." (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 286). Surprisingly good memories have also been manifested by people better known to the general public. Mozart, it is said, commonly remembered and could replay, correct to the last note, a piece which he had heard only once.

It is a popular misconception that memory is a kind of box of limited dimensions that will take so much and no more. But the truth is the very reverse: the more extensive one's knowledge—and I mean *knowledge*, true understanding—the greater obviously is one's intelligence, that is, the easier is it for one to take in something new and remember it.

CHAPTER IV

THE ETERNAL LOGOS—III

BUT there is another side of memory that we must look at, its *active* side, when "remembering" consists of *doing* something or of *restraining* oneself from doing something which one would ordinarily have done. It may be a simple thing like remembering to post a letter, or remembering *not* to cross the road without having first looked to right and left for oncoming traffic. Or it may be something of greater, even far greater, import: the achievement of a great life-dedication.

Intending or purposing to do anything sets up an inner pressure which, when the appropriate conditions for its fulfilment are present, manifests as a sort of inner push either towards or in restraint of action. Generally, the inner push is accompanied by the substantive memory of one's intention, but one may sometimes have a sense of that inner urging, causing an uneasiness which haunts one as long as the intention remains unfulfilled, and not remember what it was one had intended to do or not to do. This is one of the most remarkable phenomena in the whole perplexing problem of memory, and surely establishes beyond doubt that the bending of the will towards what is intended is itself recorded in Ākāsha as something distinct from the substantive content of one's intention and, moveover, can manifest itself in the consciousness independently of the latter.

Much of what we do or avoid doing in life consists of active remembering, the fulfilment of intentions made in the past—not necessarily in this life—although we may not remember having made them. Of course, our basic pressures—acquisitiveness, inquisitiveness, secretiveness, escapism from danger, and so on—are natural and instinctive, not only to Man but also to other species of animals, and do not spring from intentions made with an eye on the future. But other pressures go on building up out of just such intentions, made in the light of wisdom learnt from our experiences, or advice from parents, teachers and instructors, from friends and associates, from public speakers and broadcasters, from the writers of the books and periodicals we read, or in conformity with orders and injunctions from those in authority over us. And there are other pressures which we derive from others, not by way of the spoken word, but from resolves made in observing what they do, resolves either to emulate their good example or to guard against following their bad example.

Still other pressures—far more than we are aware of—develop by a sort of spiritual osmosis (quite literally, since " osmosis " means " pressure ") from resolves made *by others* on one's behalf. Some of it is directed at oneself personally. In one's childhood a loving mother, looking ahead in her imagination, may make to herself a picture of one in maturity, some ideal characteristic being prominent in the foreground of the picture, and devoutly wish, even bend her will, that one grow up to realize that ideal. Such resolving on one's behalf is not lost in the void but is recorded in Ākāsha, to manifest as an urging at the appropriate time.

There are other resolves made on behalf of one, not personally, but as a member of a collective unit of some kind. Think how many English poets, philosophers and statesmen have portrayed the England they idealized and set England to realize those ideals, in lines such as these:

> **This England never did, nor never shall,**
> **Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror,**
> **But when it first did help to wound itself.**
> **Now these her princes are come home again,**
> **Come the three corners of the world in arms,**
> **And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,**
> **If England to itself do rest but true.**
>
> **Shakespeare: *King John***

Lines such as these, repeated countless times by English lips and reflected in English purposings, have helped to establish a collective pressure, one of many that make up the character of England, its ethos. The " soul of a nation " is a positive reality in Ākāsha just as much as an individual soul is. Still other pressures are global, envisaging all humanity. Here again we find poets, philosophers, statesmen giving expression to such pressures.

> **It's coming yet, for a' that,**
> **That man to man the world o'er**
> **Shall brothers be for a' that.**

Tennyson's " Parliament of man, the Federation of the world," from being a poet's dream has become the avowed objective of the world's statesmen.

These collective pressures tend to affect the individual. The pressure from Ākāsha will stir no responding chords in one's mind if one has no strings attuned to it—think how many people are insensible to global or even national ideals. Even if one is, the effect may be only a sense of an urging, or just that of a counselling. In order that it may have a force impelling one to attempt its fulfilment, one must reinforce it by oneself bending one's will towards it.

It has already been remarked that Newton, in inventing the calculus, was merely *re*discovering a method of mathematical computation that was known of old. But not only the achievement but the very thrust of the will towards that achievement, the faith and the fire that carried him to success, were themselves not spontaneous but a coming to life again of the same things that had manifested in those earlier mathematicians and had resulted in that earlier form of the calculus. What the Master K. H. says in the following passage would be no less true if it had been said of Newton instead of Archimedes:

> **Abstract enquiries into the most puzzling problems did not arise in the brain of Archimedes as a spontaneous and hitherto untouched subject, but rather as a reflection of prior enquiries in the same direction and by men separated from his days by as long a period—and far longer—than the one which separates you from the great Syracusan. The *vril* of the " Coming Race " was the common property of races now extinct. And, as the very existence of those gigantic ancestors of ours is now questioned—though in the *Himavats*, on the very territory belonging to you we have a cave full of the skeletons of these giants—and their huge frames when found are invariably regarded as isolated freaks of nature, so the *vril* or *Akas*—as we call it—is looked upon as an impossibility, a myth. And, without a thorough knowledge of *Akas*, its combinations and properties, how can Science hope to account for such phenomena?**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 2-3.**

—" such phenomena " as Archimedes being stirred by the same know-quest as had stirred those forgotten scientists of a forgotten age. Archimedes' sense of the urge was a playback into his consciousness of the urge which had engaged them and which, preserved in *Akas*, had remained to stir minds like Archimedes' which could respond to it. Whether or not, having sensed the urge, he bends his will to its achievement is up to him. Freedom of will is ours always. He probably hesitates at first to commit himself to the quest, regarding it as beyond his powers. But he finally takes the plunge, and finds himself committed to an arduous, but at the same time ardor-kindling, task. Again and again he marshals in his mind the facts which he seeks an explanation for. But, in spite of all his efforts he appears to be no nearer a solution. And then suddenly while in his bath, so the story goes, it flashes into his mind, and in an ecstasy he rushes out shouting, "Eureka! Eureka!"

The Master calls Archimedes' know-quest a "reflection" of the know-quest of the earlier thinkers. Employing a mid-twentieth century metaphor, we might call it a "transfer," using the term as a tape-recordist or a producer of gramophone records would. Archimedes' Manas is the electronic machine which turns the ākāshic recording of the earlier scientists' know-quest into an urge to engage in such a know-quest. He bends his will in furtherance of the urge and, in so doing, makes a recording of it in his own Ātmā as a purpose in his life.

Just as one's Buddhi goes on building up as a result of one's taking in new "notings," evolving in the process the strings that respond to them, so one's Ātmā also goes on building up as one conceives new purposes and commits oneself to their achievement. A bending of the will does not vanish into nothingness as soon as it ceases to be in one's consciousness. It lives on in Ākāsha, later resolves of the same tenor serving to reinforce it, until the cumulative strength becomes such that a fresh resolve, no stronger than any of its predecessors, will carry one into action to attempt its fulfilment. A familiar, if minor, example of this is the decision to get out of bed on a cold morning. One makes the decision again and again and yet stays on in the snugness of one's blankets, finding it beyond one's powers to implement the decision in positive action. Then suddenly one finds oneself throwing off the blankets and getting out of bed, a slight will-thrust having served to carry one's resolve to its fulfilment. But that final thrust of the will is like the final stroke of the axe that fells the tree, the only difference being that whereas the effects of the earlier axe-strokes are plain to see, those of the earlier will-strokes are not.

The purposes which we set ourselves in life generally call for greater mental and physical abilities than are needed for getting out of bed, and may engage one for years, even a lifetime—nay, *many* lifetimes—before they reach accomplishment. But—and this is a very remarkable fact, indeed a most fascinating one—the will-thrust itself evokes the wherewithal—the knowledge and abilities—necessary to its achievement. Ātmā evokes Buddhi, the two being but the male and female aspects of the same principle.

> **You will easily understand what is meant by the " one and only " element or principle in the universe and that *androgynous*; the seven-headed serpent *Ananta* of Vishnu, the *Nag* around Buddha —the great dragon eternity biting with its *active* head its *passive* tail, from the emanations of which spring worlds, beings and things.**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 72-3.**

There is a wealth of meaning in this passage, written by the Master M. The " ' one and only ' element or principle " is, of course, Ākāsha, the eternal. " Androgynous " means " male-female " or, more accurately, " manly-womanly," the reference being to the active and passive aspects of Ākāsha, described in this paper. Vishnu (from *vish*, meaning " to serve ") represents the spirit of service in man, from which proceeds creative work of all kinds and which is carried through eternity by imperishable Ākāsha, represented in Hindu symbology as "Ananta, the Serpent of Eternity, which carries Vishnu through the Manvantara". (*The Secret Doctrine*, I, 438.) "An-anta" means "un-ending," which in a way is the same word, the two parts of the Sanskrit word being closely related to the corresponding parts of the English word.

Theosophists are familiar with the symbol of the serpent "biting with its *active* head it *passive* tail, from the emanations of which proceed worlds, beings and things". What kind of world, being or thing emanates depends on the kind and force of the bite. Take an example. A young woman, glowing with a love of Theosophy, this search for the truth about life, its origin and its purpose, and filled with admiration for the work done to promote it, has been doing what she can to help, assisting to serve teas, doing clerical work or some such thing. But her urge remains unsatisfied by performing these ancillary offices. Several times she has had the thought enter her head of giving talks on the subject, but the thought has been immediately dropped like a nasty insect, or, later, after being held for a moment's consideration, has been dismissed as calling for abilities which she feels she does not command. Comes an occasion when she stays it in her mind to look it over more carefully. She is conscious of an inner voice urging her to undertake it, filling her with a faith in herself and a fire to engage in the work. After some hesitation she takes the plunge and decides to make the spreading of Theosophy by means of talks a definite purpose of her life. It may be thought that "takes the plunge" is a somewhat grandiose expression for the step she takes, but think how many people there are who would regard having to face an audience as a plunge into waters beyond their depths.

She may resolve to do what she finds so many other Theosophical speakers doing, that is, repeat in her own words what she has read in books on Theosophy—that would be but a nip that the active head of the serpent gives the tail. On the other hand she may decide to do all she can to get at the real truth in these matters and to present it to others in clear, precise and, at the same time, engaging language, so as to get that truth across to them whole and entire. She cannot help but see that all this would call for deep study and the development of the more than ordinary abilities requisite for her purpose. But she makes that her purpose and refuses to settle for less. Quite a bite *that*, as a result of which she is going to be unsettled for long years to come. Indeed the bite will be repeated again and again quite as hard before there begins to emanate anythig like the being originally conceived.

It is just possible that she may think that setting oneself such a purpose in life is something that has never quite been done before, something rather new in the world. But she would be wrong. Earlier Theosophists of this age and ages gone by undoubtedly conceived the same purpose and made it their objective with the same faith and fire—all of which continues as part of the global Ātmā in the eternal motion of Ākāsha. And that, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, (III, 502), is what the radical meaning of the word is. "The Great Breath spoken of in our first volume is ĀTMĀ, the etymology of which is '*eternal motion*'."

Now the concept, the resolve, the faith and the fire of the earlier Theosophists are all tied up together in the ākāshic motion. Our young Theosophical worker, in conceiving the same purpose, has evoked a playback of the whole recording into her consciousness from Ākāsha, including the resolve, the faith and the fire. Tied up also with this purpose is the means of its achievement, because those earlier Theosophists had worked out those means and, in so doing, had made recordings of all that too in the Universal Buddhi. Much of their findings would have been passed on to others in verbal and written teachings, which she would no doubt study. But, at the same time, for a true insight into those truths she makes what may be called a frontal attack on her problem, setting before herself as clearly as she can the data of the problem and pressing on them with all the powers of her intellect in an effort to penetrate to the underlying truths. In course of time she will come to perceive those truths one by one, having caused the recordings of them to play back into her consciousness from Ākāsha. The Sanskrit word for penetrating to truth in this way is *Dhyāna*, defined in *The Secret Doctrine* (III, 379) as "meditation, omnipotent devotion". The word—pronounced "Jān," just as, in English, the "di" in "soldier" is pronounced as "j"—came to be used of that body of deepest truths which, although in their essence they can be penetrated to only by *Dhyāna*, have nevertheless been taught in esoteric circles by the medium of language. We read in the Introduction to *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 4):

> Furthermore, the records we mean to place before the reader embrace the esoteric tenets of the whole world since the beginning of our humanity, and Buddhistic Occultism occupies therein only its legitimate place, and no more. Indeed, the secret portions of the *Dan* or *Janna* (*Dhyana*) of Gautama's metaphysics—grand as they appear to one unacquainted with the tenets of the Wisdom-Religion of antiquity—are but a very small portion of the whole.

There is a footnote to this, which reads:

> *Dan*, in modern Chinese and Tibetan phonetics *Chhan*, is the general term for the esoteric schools and their literature. In

the old books, the word *Janna* is defined as "reforming one's self by meditation and knowledge," a second *inner* birth. Hence *Dzan*, *Djan* phonetically; the *Book of Dzyan.*

In the Chinese "Chhan" (sometimes spelt "Cha'an") the initial sound is, to an English ear, more like "j" than "ch". H. P. Blavatsky was probably thinking as a Russian in using the spelling "Dzan" or "Dzyan," because the phoneme which in English is represented by "j" is represented in Russian by a digraph, the nearest equivalent of which in English would be "dz". But the pronunciation is "Jān" all the same. The Japanese form of the word is "Zen".

But let us return to our young aspirant. The bite made by her supreme will, her Ātmā, starts a process in which there is a constant interplay between Ātmā, Buddhi and Manas. On the screen of her consciousness there is at first only a nebulous idea of disseminating carefully verified Theosophical truths in a way that would best get them across to others with the minimum risk of distortion. But her picture of what those truths are is not quite clear, nor can she see clearly how she is to get them across. However, as a result of deep and unremitting *Dhyāna* there would in time appear on the screen—suddenly and when least expected—a suggestion of a picture that would be an answer to some part of her problem, maybe a clear perception of a particular truth about which she had till then been rather vague, or else the thought that she must always take pains to arrange and present her subject in such a way as to make it pleasantly easy for her hearers to follow her. What has happened is that her Manas has succeeded in turning into conscious thought the recording of it in Ākāsha. If, as a result, she now makes a resolve to put the suggestion into effect, she makes it a feature of her Ātmā, which, reinforced by further resolves of the same kind, will lead to her talks having the noteworthy characteristic that her subject is always developed in a way that makes comprehension easy.

Much else will emanate in due course as a result of that original bite—a clearer understanding of truth after truth in the realm of Theosophy, a habit of careful verification of any such truth before making a statement about it, clarity and precision in statement, elegant diction and a pleasant voice, enabling people to go on listening to her—all making up a woman, no longer young, having a deeper understanding of Theosophy than she had at first, and a noteworthy skill in presenting it to others. Her life-purpose and her ability to effect that purpose have become conspicuous in her Ātmā and Buddhi respectively, known in Chinese esotericism as Kwan-Shai-Yin and Kwan-Yin.

> ***Kwan-shai-yin*—or the universally manifested voice—is active, *male*; and must not be confounded with *Kwan-yin*, or *Buddhi* the Spiritual Soul (the sixth Pr.) and the vehicle of its " Lord."**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, P. 339.**

> **To close, Kwan-Shi-Yin and Kwan-Yin are the two aspects, male and female, of the same principle in Kosmos, Nature and Man of Divine Wisdom and Intelligence. They are the Christos-Sophia, of the mystic Gnostics, the Logos and its Shakti.**
>
> ***The Secret Doctrine*, I, 513.**

" Logos " again. This is where we came in. Yet again we see that the name is identified with Ātmā, and that its shakti or vehicle, without which its purpose cannot be fulfilled, is Buddhi or Sophia. " Sophia " is an exact equivalent of " Buddhi " and connotes not only *intellectual* ability, but any skill or adeptness in effecting a purpose. With regard to the use of "Christos" as another name for Ātmā we read:

> **Note well that "Christos" with the Gnostics meant the Impersonal Principle, the Ātman of the Universe, and the Ātmā within every man's soul—and not Jesus.**
>
> ***The Secret Doctrine*, I, 157.**

The Master K. H. says the same thing in the passage from *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, quoted at the beginning of this paper. So does the Mahachohan:

> **Mystical Christianity, that is to say that Christianity which teaches self-redemption through our own seventh principle—this liberated Para-Ātmā (Augoeides) called by some Christ . . .**
>
> ***Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, 1st Series, 3rd ed., p. 6,**

The question is: How can the term "christos," which means "anointed," be applied to Ātmā? H. P. Blavatsky declares that the word should be, and originally was, "chrestos," meaning "good". The following passage, most of which is a quotation from Mackenzie's *Royal Masonic Cyclopaedia*, appears in *Isis Unveiled* (II, 324) and again in *The Secret Doctrine* (III, 289):

> **Lepsius shows that the word *Nofre* means Chrestos, "good," and that one of the titles of Osiris, "Onnofre," must be translated "the goodness of God made manifest". "The worship of Christ was not universal at this early date," explains Mackenzie, "by which I mean that Christolatry had not been introduced; but the worship of *Chrestos*—the Good Principle—had preceded it by many centuries, and even survived the general adoption of Christianity . . .**

The Master K. H. too equates "Christ" with "Good":

> **Except in so far that he constantly uses the terms "God" and "Christ" which taken in their esoteric sense simply mean**

> " Good "—in its dual aspect of the abstract and the *concrete* and nothing more dogmatic—Eliphas Levi is not in any *direct* conflict with our teachings.
>
> *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 123.

" God " and " Christ " are the abstract and concrete aspects respectively of the " Good," that is " the *un*-manifested *Father* and the manifested *Son* . . . the Universal and the individualized seventh Principle . . ." (ibid. p. 338).

Is that what is meant by " and the Word was God " in the fourth Gospel (which, we read in *Isis Unveiled*, II, 91, " was not written by John but by a Platonist or a Gnostic belonging to the Neo-platonic school ") ? Not quite, because the radical meaning of " Theos " in the original Greek is " motion ". H. P. Blavatsky writes: " Plato proves himself an Initiate when saying in *Cratylus* tha t*θεός* is derived from *θέειν* to move, to run . . ." in a footnote to the following passage:

> It is the ONE LIFE, eternal, invisible, yet omnipresent, without beginning or end, yet periodical in its regular manifestations —between which periods reigns the dark mystery of Non-Being; unconscious; yet absolute Consciousness, unrealizable, yet the one self-existing Reality; truly, " a Chaos to the sense, a Kosmos to the reason ". Its one absolute attribute, which is Itself, eternal, ceaseless Motion, is called in esoteric parlance the Great Breath, which is the perpetual motion of the Universe, in the sense of limitless, ever-present Space.
>
> *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 32.

The Master K. H. too is at great pains to stress that the " eternal and uncreated Deity " is purely and simply " perpetual motion ":

> We say and affirm that that motion—the universal perpetual motion which never ceases, never slackens nor increases its speed, not even during the interludes between the pralayas, or " nights of

Brahma," but goes on like a mill set in motion, whether it has anything to grind or not (for the pralaya means the temporary loss of every form, but by no means the destruction of cosmic matter which is eternal)—we say this perpetual motion is the only eternal and uncreated Deity we are able to recognize.

***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett,* p. 135.**

But, if "Theos" is motion, what is meant by "God (Theos) is Light, not such as one sees, nor such as the sun and fire" in the quotation from Origen given earlier? This is no doubt the same Light as that which "shines on in the Darkness, and the Darkness has never quenched it"—using the translation of *The New English Bible.* It is the Astral Light which, as we have seen, is one manifestation of the perpetual motion of Ākāsha.

Light is the first begotten, and the first emanation of the Supreme, and Light is Life, says the evangelist. Both are electricity—the life-principle, the *anima mundi,* pervading the universe, the electric vivifier of all things.

***Isis Unveiled,* I, 258.**

The "Darkness" spoken of by the Evangelist is undoubtedly the Pralaya, throughout which the Light "shines on". Thus it pre-exists the creation of the phenomenal universe in the next Manvantara. And that makes some sense of the Genesis account, which some critics have found ridiculous, of light having been created before the phenomenal universe, which, in their view, can be the only possible source of light. That account is a "distorted tradition" (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 75) tracing back to Oriental teaching:

Strictly speaking, it is difficult to view the Jewish *Book of Genesis* otherwise than as a chip from the trunk of the mundane tree of universal Cosmogony, rendered in Oriental allegories. As

> cycle succeeded cycle, and one nation after another came upon the world's stage to play its brief part in the majestic drama of human life, each new people evolved from ancestral traditions its own religion, giving it a local color, and stamping it with individual characteristics.
>
> *Isis Unveiled*, II, 216.

So it is not surprising that what is reverenced in so many different religions under so many different names is, in origin, the same Light of Life.

> The chaos of the ancients; the Zoroastrian sacred fire, or the *Antusbyrum* of the Parsees; the Hermes-fire; the Elmes-fire of the ancient Germans; the lightning of Cybele; the burning torch of Apollo; the flame on the altar of Pan; the inextinguishable fire in the temple on the Acropolis, and in that of Vesta; the fire-flame of Pluto's helm; the brilliant sparks on the hats of the Dioscuri, on the Gorgon head, the helm of Pallas, and the staff of Mercury; the πύρ ἄσβεστος; the Egyptian Phtha, or Ra; the Grecian *Zeus Cataibates* (the descending); the pentacostal fire-tongues; the burning bush of Moses; the pillar of fire of the *Exodus*, and the "burning lamp" of Abram; the eternal fire of the "bottomless pit"; the Delphic oracular vapors; the Sidereal light of the Rosicrucians; the AKASA of the Hindu adepts: the Astral light of Eliphas Levi; the nerve-aura and the fluid of the magnetists; the *od* of Reichenbach; the fire-globe, or *meteor-cat* of Babinet; the *Psychode* and ectenic force of Thury; the psychic force of Sergeant Cox and Mr. Crookes; the atmospheric magnetism of some naturalists; galvanism; and finally, electricity, are but various names for many different manifestations, or effects of the same mysterious, all-pervading cause— the Greek Archeus, or Αρχαῖος. Sir E. Bulwer-Lytton, in his *Coming Race*, describes it as the VRIL.
>
> *Isis Unveiled*, I, 125.

It has commonly been anthropomorphized, but the names given to these anthropomorphic beings, and the functions ascribed to them, generally point to the underlying truth. For example, Hermes/Mercury is described as a messenger from God to Man. That messenger is the " Voice," which even Byron recognized to be the " oracle of God ". Etymologists have difficulty with the name, " Mercurius," and suggest that it is derived from the Latin " merx ". But we read in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 377), " ' Now Koros [Kurios] . . . signifies the pure and unmixed nature of Intellect—Wisdom,' says Plato in Cratylus; and Kurios is Mercury (Mercurius, Mar-kurios), the Divine Wisdom." This is most interesting: " Kurios " is, of course, the Greek for " Lord ". But what are we to make of " Mar " ? Can it be that " Mercurius " is a Latin corruption of a forgotten Greek word intended as a translation of the Sanskrit " Avalokitesvara," of which the Master K. H. writes, " *Avalokita Isvar* literally interpreted means ' the Lord that *is seen* ' " (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 338). " Is seen " may be taken quite literally to refer to the Astral Light, but more probably it was intended to mean " manifested " in reference to the " Voice," and that is how the Master takes it, because he writes of " Avalokitesvara, . . . the manifested ' Voice ' (or *Logos*)" (*The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 340).

The names, Avalokitesvara, Parabrahm, and even the more familiar ones, Logos, God, may suggest something remote, having nothing to do with everyday life. But the truth is that " in him we live and move and have our being " in the very fullest sense.

CHAPTER V

BUDDHI, THE WONDER-WORKING FEMALE PRINCIPLE—I

THE Master K. H., in a footnote added to Eliphas Levi's *The Paradoxes of the Highest Science*, sets out:

> **The names of the seven Skandhas or Principles. 7. Spirit, the reflection of the ONE *Life*. 6. The Spiritual Soul (*Female*). 5. The Animal Soul (*Manas*). 4. The *Kama Rupa*. . . . 3. The Life-soul, *Linga sarira*. 2. The Vital principle. 1. The gross body or material form . . .**

The designation, "Female," applied to the sixth principle, is intriguing. This is not to be dismissed as of no significance, because the same Master has written elsewhere:

> ***Kwan-shai-yin*—or the universally manifested voice is active —*male*; and must not be confounded with *Kwan-yin*, or *Buddhi* the Spiritual Soul (the sixth Pr.) and the vehicle of its "Lord". It is *Kwan-yin* that is the female principle . . .**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 344.**

This is echoed in *The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed. I, 513:

> **To close, Kwan-Shi-yin and Kwan Yin are the two aspects, male and female, of the same principle in Kosmos, Nature and Man, of Divine Wisdom and Intelligence. They are the Christos-Sophia of the mystic Gnostics, the Logos and its Shakti.**

Now why is the sixth principle—whether of the Kosmos to Nature, or of Man—described as female? And how is it the " vehicle " or " shakti " of the seventh? But first let us get a clear picture of Buddhi in our minds, focusing our attention on the *human* principle.

Psychologists have long recognized that there is in each one of us an invaluable and wonderful factor which enables one to achieve a purpose which one has set oneself heart and soul to achieve, such as penetrating to a truth which would explain a puzzling phenomenon, even one hitherto regarded as beyond human comprehension. Lancelot L. Whyte writes in *Harper's Magazine* (July, 1951):

> There are few experiences quite so satisfactory as getting a good idea. You've had a problem, you've thought about it till you were tired, forgotten it and perhaps slept on it, and then, flash! when you weren't thinking about it, suddenly the answer has come to you as a gift from the gods. . . .
>
> Of course, all ideas don't come like that, but the interesting thing is that so many do, particularly the most important ones. They burst into the mind, glowing with the heat of creation. How they do it is a mystery. Psychology does not yet understand even the ordinary processes of conscious thought, but the emergence of new ideas by a " leap in thought," as Dewey put it, is particularly intriguing, because they must have come from somewhere. For the moment let us assume that they come from the " unconscious ".

Robert R. Updegraff, in *The Reader's Digest* (May 1960, British edition) calls it the " subconscious ":

> Nearly all of us have had the experience of travelling on a train with no one to talk to, or of sitting through a concert or lecture to which we were not really listening, and having ideas tumbling over themselves in our minds. This is the subconscious mind at work, taking advantage of the relaxed state of the conscious mind. It is capable of doing much of our best thinking and of helping us to solve our most perplexing problems. It can bring to bear on all our affairs far more wisdom and experience than our conscious minds command.

The use of the word, " subconscious," in this connection is unfortunate. Writers have a tendency to lump together as " subconscious " all mental processes which are outside the field of consciousness but which, in fact, vary fundamentally in their essence and origin. Psychologists used the term orginally of that which is just outside the margin of consciousness.

> **There is, first, the region of fullest attention, where our mental activity is most intense; this is called the " focus " of consciousness. Then there is the region of dimmer consciousness, lying round the focus; this has been called the " margin of consciousness ". . . . there is another degree of consciousness in which mental processes do really exist, but are unable to make themselves singly felt. . . . Such processes are said to be *subconscious*. . . . we must not, as many writers do, extend the meaning of the *subconscious* until it includes the *unconscious*. A subconscious impression, we repeat, is one which, when it occurs, is so feeble as to be incapable of diverting attention to itself. . . . But it is not unconscious. [For if the stimulus ceases, you notice a change. When you are at work in a room, a familiar sound, such as the ticking of a clock, may not be noticed. But if the clock suddenly stops the silence seems greater than before.]**
>
> **Mellone and Drummond, *The Elements of Psychology*, pp. 40-44.**

Mental processes include, besides perceiving—the one envisaged in the above extract—those of remembering and imagining (accompanied in both cases by feeling of some kind, either of like or dislike for what is remembered or imagined), reasoning and deciding. And these too may be subconscious, though none the less real, leading to action, which, even if subconscious for the doer—as it may well be—is real enough to be consciously observable by onlookers. The reason why his own consciousness is not focused on all these doings of his—perception, memory, imagination, emotion, reasoning, decision, action—is the same as the reason why it is not focused on the ticking of the clock: they follow paths made familiar by constant and repeated use and so do not engage his attention.

But if he were to focus his attention on them, he could, commonly, distinguish them and so bring the subconscious processes into consciousness. But it sometimes happens that he cannot, despite all his efforts, distinguish the paths his subconscious takes, although it may do so repeatedly, resulting in a habitual action. Nor, often, can he remember when and why he took that path consciously and deliberately in the first instance. It then becomes the task of the psychiatrist to look into his subconscious and try to discover all this, especially if the result, what he does, is regrettable.

The important point is that the subconscious can be lighted up and scrutinized in full consciousness, sometimes by the person himself, oftener by those trained to do it. But what Mr. Updegraff calls the "subconscious" and Mr. Whyte calls, more accurately, the "unconscious," differs in two essential respects from the subconscious of the psychiatrists: 1. It takes a path which does not appear to have ever been taken before by the person himself or, often, by anyone else. 2. It defies all efforts to scrutinize it and trace it. Clearly it is something entirely different.

It would probably be best to call it the "Superconscious". It is a faculty quite distinct from Manas, the mind conscious *or subconscious*, and works independently of it, often when it is engaged in something quite different, and even when it is unconscious, as during sleep.

This Superconscious is Buddhi. The passages quoted draw attention to the wonders it works in solving intellectual problems and giving the conscious mind, in a sudden flash of inspiration, a clear perception of a long-sought truth. But it plays a glorious—and, indeed, an indispensable—part, not only in the quest of knowledge, but in all human endeavor to which men and women dedicate themselves. Winston Churchill—committed to the consummation of the seemingly impossible task of saving England and the world from falling under the heel of Hitler—and Florence Nightingale—committed to the achievement of her dream of creating a body of nurses who would really understand the complaints of the patients and so could more intelligently do their allotted work of trying to alleviate them—both employed their Buddhi in achieving their respective goals.

But it is not only in world-shaking works of high emprise such as these that Buddhi takes part. It operates in from-the-heart undertakings at all levels, and even in the minutiae of such undertakings. A violinist who has ideated (meaning: conceived as an idea) a particular effect in the playing of a particular passage—or even phrase—of a work, and, having idealized it (in the sense: set it before himself as an ideal which he *must* attain), has labored hard to achieve it, hitherto without success, may later find himself suddenly producing just that effect when he was least expecting it. A bowler, having worked tirelessly, but vainly, at the nets to bring off a particular kind of delivery which he had ideated, may however surprise himself by unexpectedly achieving it in actual play.

But in none of these cases has there been essentially an urge to *know*. The statesman, the humanitarian, the musician, the sportsman, have each sought to *do* something.

Buddhi is commonly described as intuition. But that can be misleading, because people often misjudge a "hunch" to be intuition. They come up against problems and, being unable or too lazy to make an honest-to-goodness effort to solve them, plump straightway for a slick solution that occurs to them and, finding that they cannot vindicate it on any other ground, base its validity on a sort of inner conviction which, they claim, is intuition.

Between this sort of intuition and Buddhic intuition there is a vital difference. Or, rather, two: 1. The latter comes only as a result of one's having previously envisaged the problem in the case and set oneself heart and soul to find the solution. 2. The solution does not come when one first gets to grips with the problem but later, often much later, and commonly when the problem has been entirely forgotten and one is engaged in something quite different.

Both the writers already mentioned lay great emphasis on the fact that, although the Superconscious is capable of the most astonishing discoveries of recondite truths, it can do so *only as the result of its being set in motion by the conscious mind.* Mr. Whyte writes:

> It is therefore natural that the analogy of growth has often been used for creative thought.... But growth requires a seed, and the heart of the creative process lies in the production of the original fertile nucleus from which growth can proceed. This initial step in all creation consists in the establishment of a new unity from disparate elements, of order out of disorder, of shape from what was formless. The mind achieves this by the reshaping, so as to form a new unit, of a selection of the separate elements derived from experience and stored in memory.

Mr. Updegraff uses another simile:

> The process of thinking is akin to the process of cooking. Although direct heat is ordinarily used, many dishes are better brought to completion after long, slow cooking by retained heat.
>
> The subconscious mind is a fireless cooker into which we can put our problems to finish the cooking on "retained thought"...

> **One rule always holds good: You must give your problems to your subconscious mind in the form of *definite assignments* after assembling all the essential facts, figures and arguments. The cooking process must first be started by focusing your mind on this material long and intently enough to get it thoroughly heated with your best conscious thinking.**

The Master K. H. says exactly the same thing in different words:

> **The supreme energy resides in the *Buddhi*; latent—when wedded to *Ātman* alone, active and irresistible when galvanized by the *essence* of "Manas"...**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, p. 341.**

So does H. P. Blavatsky:

> **Without Manas, the "Reasoning Soul," or Mind. . . . Ātmā-Buddhi is irrational on this plane and cannot act.**
>
> ***The Secret Doctrine* I, 263.**

We all have within our reach the omnipotent power of our Monad. But, ordinarily, it is latent, dormant, inactive. To awaken and set in motion that irresistible force it is necessary that the conscious mind, Manas, present it with a definite, clear-cut requisition. If then the supreme will, Ātmā, gives its *le roy le veult*, the mightiest power available to man, his Buddhi, gets to work to implement it.

For example, a person conceives the idea of expressing in music—the most divine and *spiritual* of arts—this very thing: Ātmā-Buddhi-Manas working together to achieve a noble purpose. Having observed the whole process and experienced the succession of attendant spiritual emotions, he thinks how wonderful it would be to capture and preserve them in a musical creation, so that anyone who has ever known them can have them stirred again in his being by that music. He may find himself turning this idea over in his mind again and yet again, and let it slip from his mind with a sigh that no composer had conceived the idea and worked it into reality. He himself has done some composing, but the thought of his creating such a work himself is promptly dismissed as beyond his powers, a theme for a master. Comes an occasion when he stays the thought in his mind for a moment's consideration: since there appears to be no established composer interested in the idea, the work, if it is ever to become a reality, would have to be done by himself. All the same, dear as it is to his heart to have the idea realized, he feels that he cannot undertake it.

However, he cannot dismiss it from his mind. There is an inward voice insistently urging him to attempt it, breathing a supreme assurance that he *can* do it if only he will try. This is his Ātmā, the immortal, omniscient element in each one of us, acclaimed by many a seer, sung by many a poet. By George Santayana, for example:

O world, thou choosest not the better part!
It is not wisdom to be only wise,
And on the inward vision close the eyes,
But it is wisdom to believe the heart.
Columbus found a world, and had no chart,
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies;
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art.
Our knowledge is a torch of smoky pine
That lights the pathway but one step ahead
Across a void of mystery and dread.
Bid, then, the tender light of faith to shine
By which alone the mortal heart is led
Unto the thinking of the thought divine.

This urging from one's inmost being is not necessarily given to every project conceived by Manas. On the contrary, Ātmā's voice may be quite clear in condemnation. If one persists with it notwithstanding, it is only as in hateful insurrection against the divine lord of one's being.

Between the acting of a dreadful thing
And the first motion, all the interim is
Like a phantasma or a hideous dream:
The genius and the mortal instruments
Are then in council, and the state of man,
Like to a little kingdom, suffers then
The nature of an insurrection.

Shakespeare, *Julius Ceasar*

The " Genius " in question is Ātmā. The Master K. H. has written:

> **Remember, . . . that you stand before your Ātmā, which is your judge, and which no smiles, nor falsehoods, nor sophistries can deceive.**

***Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, First Series, 3rd ed., p. 67.**

Ātmā has an unerring sense of the rightness or wrongness of an action, whether already committed, or only intended, or just simply ideated—rightness or wrongness, not only from the point of view of morality, but also from that of prudence, of expediency, or of usefulness.

There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where truth abides in fulness.

Browning, *Paracelsus*

Sometimes Ātmā's fiat is withheld from an idea, not because it is wrong morally, but because it is *truly* beyond one's powers. We are all the time conceiving laudable ideas—a breath-taking scene being transferred to canvas, a tyrant withstood, a reform effected, a movement organized—which evoke no promptings from Ātmā to do oneself, the plain truth being that they are truly beyond one's powers to achieve. In such a case it would be quixotic to attempt what is manifestly doomed to failure, especially as, when that failure should come, as come it must, it would plant in one a lasting dread of ever again attempting anything at all idealistic.

But let us return to our composer. Say that, having heard his Ātmā's voice urging him to undertake the work which his Manas has conceived and having more than once shrunk from it, he at last does what the poet urges although he cannot see his way at all clearly or fully to the achievement of the work, he "trusts his soul's invincible surmise," plucks up courage, and determines to achieve it, whatever the difficulties.

His Ātmā has planted in his Buddhi the seed of the work which his Manas has ideated. It may be thought that he can now leave it to develop by itself and just wait for the time when the fruit, fully ripe, will fall as an inspiration into his conscious mind. But in truth he has to tend the seed diligently to enable it to grow. There will be a constant interplay of Ātmā-Buddhi-Manas—Manas, the conscious mind, having to do its full share in promoting the growth of the work and bringing it to fruition.

He must visualize and hold in his mind all that he has observed and felt in connection with it, recreating it all as clearly and vividly as he can and laying all this to his heart, his Ātmā, so that he may in his heart of hearts bend his will towards portraying it all in music. He sees the problem resolving itself into a multiplicity of parts, each a problem in itself: the form of the musical creation (whether a solo monochrome, a chamber water color, or a full symphonic painting employing all the resources of musical instruments and, maybe, the human voice as well); the thematic design of the work; its development in movements; and so on. He holds all these problems before him in his mind and bends his will in quest of the fitting solution to each problem. He may go on doing this for a long time, scanning his mind for some suggestion of an answer to one or other of the problems, and get not the haziest suggestion of an answer to anything. The best thing for him to do at this point is to forget all about it and give his thoughts to something else. Better still, do no thinking at all: go off on a holiday.

If the directive which his mind and heart had given was sound, he will probably at some time, maybe when he is least expecting it, get a brilliant flash from the Superconscious in which he will see in surprising clarity the answer to some part of his problem. Or he may have only a suggestion of the solution, or no more than a tantalizing sense of having the answer somewhere at the back of his mind. He should then try to make as definite as he can what is so vague and intangible in his mind, pressing on whatever in it is at all tangible and focusing his will to a clear picture. If he perseveres, he will sooner or later get the answer. But his conscious mind still has its share of the work to do: holding it while he sets it down in writing and trying it out in actual performance.

And so the work proceeds bit by bit, a problem solved, another arising and being held before him and examined, his will moving in quest of the perfect solution, which in course of time jumps suddenly "out of nowhere" into his consciousness. When the work is at last complete, he may look upon it and marvel how much, now in the clear light of day, was still in the unknown when he set himself to the task.

He may find several perplexing questions buzzing in his head: What exactly is this wonderful but inscrutable part of his being that does all this? How does it achieve whatever the supreme will bends in quest of? Is there some sort of store or reservoir of all possible knowledge and abilities into which it reaches for what is required? If so, where is this store and how has it come to be there?

Mr. Updegraff suggests an answer—in the last paragraph of the following excerpt:

> **One night in October 1920, Frederick Grant Banting, a young Canadian surgeon with such a small practice that he had to teach to eke out a living, was working on his next day's lecture. His subject was diabetes. Hour after hour he pored over the literature of this dread disease, his head a whirling maze of conflicting theories, case histories, accounts of experiments with dogs. Finally he went wearily to bed.**
>
> **At two in the morning he got up, turned on a light and wrote three sentences in his notebook: "Tie off pancreatic duct of dogs. Wait 6 to 8 weeks for degeneration. Remove residue and extract." Then he went back to bed and slept.**
>
> **Those three magic sentences led to the discovery of insulin. Banting's conscious mind had come to grips with one of the most baffling problems in medical science; his subconscious mind finished the job.**
>
> **The fireless-cooking process may require only hours, as in Banting's case, or it may require days or weeks. And it may be necessary to turn the heat on again consciously once in a while to keep the cooking process going. But nearly always the subconscious mind can be depended upon to finish the cooking, and frequently with greater speed than if we relied on conscious thought alone. Furthermore, it usually turns out a better product because it brings to bear all one's accumulated life experience, including much that the conscious mind has long since forgotten. In an interview on his 75th birthday, Henry Ford referred to "instinct". "What**

is instinct?" asked the interviewer. "Probably the essence of past experience and knowledge stored up for later use," replied Mr. Ford.

"Instinct"—? Anyway, this is an inspired reaching out towards the true explanation. There is indeed such a store—nay, far more, a limitless treasury—in the Universal Buddhi. The Master K. H. tells us:

> **In the other sense Avaloketisvara implies the seventh *Universal* Principle, as the object perceived by the Universal *Buddhi* "Mind" or Intelligence which is the synthetic aggregation of all the Dhyan Chohans, as of all other intelligences whether great or small, that ever were, are, or will be.**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 343-4.**

It is the essence of past experience and knowledge, not only of oneself alone, as Mr. Updegraff thinks, but of *all* thinkers and doers, including the greatest, the Dhyan-Chohans.

CHAPTER VI

BUDDHI, THE WONDER-WORKING FEMALE PRINCIPLE—II

Now what relation has one's personal Buddhi to the universal?

> **Withal, the Monad of every living being . . .** ***is an individual Dhyan Chohan, distinct from others, with a kind of spiritual Individuality of its own,*** **during one special Manvantara. Its Primary, the Spirit (Ātman), is one, of course, with the One Universal Spirit (Paramātmā), but the Vehicle (Vāhan) it is enshrined in, the Buddhi, is part and parcel of that Dhyan-Chohanic Essence;**
>
> ***The Secret Doctrine*****, 3rd ed., I, 285.**

"Part and parcel". In one's Buddhi one has access to the *whole* of the Universal Buddhi and to the untold spiritual treasures therein contained, to all possible knowledge, qualities, powers, abilities, excellences that one can ever aspire to. "If ye have faith, nothing will be impossible to you."

"Nothing impossible". But, "if ye have faith". And in that we have, if we can see it, the explanation why Buddhi is described as "female" to Ātmā's "male". It is, in fact, implied in the simile of the seed. It is Ātmā that provides this seed, the "faith," but it is in Buddhi that the seed develops and comes to fruition.

Ātmā-Buddhi-Manas constitute a triad whose relationship is that of Father-Mother-Child, all three of which are indispensable to creative work. The developing child—on the *literal* side of our simile—forms in her mind an idea of herself in some state or condition, at present non-existent, towards which she is drawn. This desired state may be simple, such as the possession of something she fancies, or more complex, entering on a career as, say, a ballet dancer. She thus finds herself with a problem on her hands which she is unable to solve herself and which she lays before her parents. It rests with the father to decide whether it is right, wise and expedient to fulfil the child's plan, but, when the go-ahead is pronounced by him, it is the mother who has to do the essential part of the work of implementing it. All the same, the child has her share of the work to do. When the creative work, the ballerina, is in being, it is the work of all three.

I must hasten to add that this does not imply any sort of inferiority of woman to man—he making the decisions, she implementing them. It is just a question of specialization of function, and she is as great and as indispensable in her function as he is in his. The greatest, and at the same time sincerest, tribute often paid to his wife by a successful man is: "Without her I could have achieved nothing." This usually is not just a mouthing of words but an expression of a truth deeply perceived. In such a case the husband is the father in our triad and, at the same time, the child in whom the creative work takes shape.

The name by which Buddhi is known in the Tāraka Rāja Yoga system is "Karanopādhi". (See *The Secret Doctrine*, II, 181). Now the Sanskrit word, "karana," means "instrument" or "agent". "Karanopādhi" is the "instrument-principle," the agent of Ātmā, the vehicle by means of which Ātmā's decrees are borne out.

It has characteristics which have come to be associated with woman. It is quite unpredictable. This feature of the Superconscious has been remarked on by many writers. There is no knowing *when* it will come up with what is requisitioned of it. Cricketers, poets, operatic singers, and others who strive after an ideal of any kind know only too well how impossible it is to foretell when and for how long their performance will be a realization of that ideal, when and for how long they will be " in form ". Often it comes up with something most unexpected and very surprising—and yet the true answer. Newton had long been torturing his brain to know what it was that held the solar system together and then, flash! suddenly saw that it was the familiar, everyday force that makes an apple fall to the ground.

We do not see Buddhi at work, and this too is essentially feminine, because woman's work is for the most part done unseen. Nor, commonly, do we take much notice of it when it has been done. But, if *not* done, we immediately notice the difference. In the same way, if Buddhi has had no part in a work, it is found to lack something which one cannot easily describe or give a name to, but the absence of which is very noticeable. People sometimes speak of a work as not having " it," and I have heard over the radio a theatre critic describe a play as devoid of " oomph ". More than one general has made himself word perfect in all the rules of warfare and conducted his battle strictly according to the book, but without giving what may truly be called his " better half," his Superconscious, a share in the undertaking—and lost.

Those who *do* perceive how much they owe to it find it nevertheless inscrutable. Dare one say what *that* reminds one of? It may be that we shall *never* know how Buddhi performs its wonders. All that we can do is be immensely grateful for all that it does.

Is it to be wondered at that Kwan Yin is represented as a woman and worshipped? We too can be worshippers of the wonder-working sixth principle, not by doing pūjā before a picture or figurine intended to represent it, but in the true meaning of the word by having a deep sense of the "worthship," the inestimable value to us, of that principle and by availing ourselves of it, invoking it with a perfect trust, felt in our inmost being, that, although we cannot look into it and see where it gets its invaluable gifts, it will somehow, some time, grant us what we earnestly seek.

Nor need we call upon it *only* when we find ourselves with a problem which we find impossible to solve by conscious, mānasic observation and reasoning. If we have truly come to appreciate what an omnipotent power we have within our reach, we shall tend to reach for it even in circumstances where there would seem to be no problem at all. A man takes up a job of some responsibility—say, as an executive in an industry. He may, as indeed most men do in the circumstances, prepare to follow in the steps of his predecessors, doing what he has seen them do. No problem there that he can see!

He may, on the other hand, grope into the invisible depths of the Superconscious for the qualities and faculties which would enable him to be all that an industrial executive *should* be, with respect to those he has authority over and to his colleagues, but chiefly to the public which the industry is intended to serve. He would, as a result of his searchings, come to distinguish the spiritual assets required and would go on to do all he could to cultivate them—employing his Buddhi all the time in his endeavors, even without knowing it—striving ever for as perfect a realization as he could of the ideals he had conceived.

It may be thought that such idealism is overdoing things somewhat, especially as it would involve so much effort to give him any chance of attaining his ideals during this short span of life. True, he *has* set himself a goal which will require hard going to reach. But, even if he does not reach it during this life—and no true idealist is ever satisfied with his attainments—his labors are not lost. In Devachan, where there are " no failures, no disappointments," his aspirations will find success—but in *subjective* form.

> **Hence—all the great plans of moral reform, of intellectual and spiritual research into abstract principles of Nature, all the divine aspirations, would, in devachan come to fruition, and the abstract entity previously known as the great Chancellor would occupy itself in this inner world of its own preparation, living, if not quite what one would call a *conscious* existence, at least a dream of such realistic vividness that none of the life-realities could ever match it. And this " dream " lasts—until Karma is satisfied in that direction, the ripple of force reaches the edge of its cyclic basin, and the being moves into the next area of causes.**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 191-2.**

In the same way, in the hereafter, our executive would in devachanic dreams be the captain of industry he had idealized. The powerful thrust created by his efforts during earth life would maintain him in an imagined functioning as such, exercising the qualities and faculties he had ideated, until he had a sense of having attained his ideals—after which he would experience *trishnā*, the thirst to do all this in actual, objective life on earth.

But, it will be argued, what is the use of all these empty dreams, this imaginary fulfilment of ideals in an imaginary world? The benefit is immense and cannot be had in any other way. I have gone into this fully in my book, *The Eternal Truths of Life*. Briefly: in exercising in his devachanic dreams all the qualities and faculties which he had sought to perfect in his earth life he is all the time assimilating them, working them into his nature, with the result that when he reappears on earth they will be found to be part of his nature, appearing as " gifts of God " and making him a " born captain of industry ".

Those who take the all too common view of regarding everyone born into this world as having had no existence whatsoever previous to this naturally regard any built-in excellence showing up in anyone as having been provided by a divine creator who makes *gifts* of such excellences—arbitrarily and not too fairly, it would appear. It is true that they are from God, but the God from whom they proceed forms part of oneself, being one's divine Monad. And they are *not* gifts. They are all come by only as a result of hard work, and not a farthing more of any than has been worked for.

They are the " treasures in heaven " which every great Teacher has enjoined us to seek. Most of us devote practically all our time and energy to possessing ourselves of material assets which are perishable and can be ours till, at most, the end of this short life. Moreover, the way, in which we can be dispossessed of them long before then are so many that their very possession creates anxiety, which is not wholly removed by insurance. But there is no need to insure spiritual assets, because they become a part of our being and there is no extraneous agency—moth, rust, robbers, fire, accident, or anything else—by which we can be dispossessed of them. We can lose them only by our own neglect of them, not using them, making buried talents of them.

We are not insensible of their great value, especially when engaged in any work at all ambitious, and we even pray for these that we find ourselves in great need of, qualities such as a penetrating wisdom, an indomitable courage, an unflagging resoluteness, an infinite and level-headed patience.

But it is not enough to raise our eyes to the unheeding stars in entreaty for these graces. Nor indeed would it be of any use to pray to a Mahātmā for them, supposing we should have the very rare fortune of meeting one, because these things are not in the gift of anyone outside oneself, however great. They can be come by only by our own efforts. There is a short, monosyllabic word which the Mahātmās commonly address to their pupils: TRY. (See *The Mahatma Letters to A. P. Sinnett*, pp. 20, 247, 341, 348, 452; *Letters from the Masters of the Wisdom*, 2nd series, pp. 11-12, 26-33, 53, 81, 85.)

" Seek and ye shall find." There is no spiritual asset that we cannot make our own, no problem that we cannot resolve fully, no work that we cannot accomplish to our complete satisfaction, if only we can have a full faith, welling up from our inmost being, in ourselves, by virtue of our Buddhi, to do so, and—TRY.

CHAPTER VII

THE VEHICLE OF PRĀNA

LOOK carefully at the following definitions of Prāna: "... the active power producing all vital phenomena" (*The Secret Doctrine*, 3rd ed. II, 627); "... the life specialized for the support of the physical organism" (*The Ancient Wisdom*, p. 82); "... the *deus ex machinā* of the living man" (*The Key to Theosophy*, 3rd ed. p. 119). Prāna is the mysterious power that operates the vast complexity of processes that are all the time going on in the living body to develop it and keep it in being as a serviceable machine for the use of the indwelling Thinker—building up of the machine; automatic replacement of damaged or worn-out tissue by new tissue built up with new cells; processing of the food consumed by the body into material for new cells and into the fuel, combustion of which produces the energy required by the Thinker for all his work, manual and intellectual; the defence set-up against harmful, alien organisms; the complex thermal system for keeping the temperature of the body at a constant level; and a multiplicity of other functions which are carried on independently of the will or even the consciousness of the tenant Thinker.

The most conspicuous of all is the action of breathing, and it is this which is most obviously seen to be absent from the body after death and gives its name to the whole complex system—" prāna " means " breath " radically and is commonly described as " the breath of life ".

We gaze in wonderment at the working of Prāna in our own bodies and in living things of all kinds and cannot help but ask: What makes Prāna tick? What is the nature of the *deus ex machinā* that operates all these functions which we find at work in the body?

With the aid of the wonderful new electronic instruments which can detect electric impulses of as little as one-millionth of a volt, scientists have been able to discover that the mechanism of, say, breathing is maintained by a cycle of electric impulses to the muscles which expand the chest and then relax to allow it to regain its unexpanded size. The Master K. H. wrote nearly eighty years ago: "Even simple muscular contraction is always accompanied with electric and magnetic phenomena . . ." (*The Mahatma Letters*, p. 161).

But, as fast as we find a solution to a problem, we see two other problems popping up from behind that solution. "Veil after veil will lift—but there must be veil upon veil behind." The two problems which arise here are: Where do these electric impulses come from? Through what medium are they transmitted?

Let us take the second question first. Dr. B. W. Richardson, F.R.S., has written (as quoted in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 579-80):

> **The idea attempted to be conveyed by the theory is, that between the molecules of the matter, solid or fluid, of which the nervous organisms, and, indeed, of which all the organic parts of a body are composed, there exists a refined subtle medium, vaporous or gaseous, which holds the molecules in a condition for motion upon each other, and for arrangement and rearrangement of form; a medium by and through which all motion is conveyed; by and through which the one organ or part of the body is held in communion with the other parts, by which and through which the outer living world communicates with**

> the living man; a medium, which, being present, enables the phenomena of life to be demonstrated, and which, being universally absent, leaves the body actually dead. . . .
>
> I use the word ether in its general sense as meaning a very light, vaporous or gaseous matter; I use it, in short, as the astronomer uses it when he speaks of the ether of Space, by which he means a subtle but material medium. . . . When I speak of a *nervous* ether, I do not convey that the ether is existent in nervous structures only: I believe truly that it is a special part of the nervous organization; but, as nerves pass into all structures that have capacities for movement and sensibilities, so the nervous ether passes into all parts; . . . When it is once fairly presented to the mind that during life *there is in the animal body a finely diffused form of matter*, a vapor filling every part—and even stored in some parts; a matter constantly renewed by the vital chemistry; a matter as easily disposed of as the breath, after it has served its purpose—a new flood of light breaks on the intelligence.

Paracelsus, writing in the sixteenth century, called it the "spiritus vitae" and described it as "an essence which is equally distributed in all parts of the human body" and which constitutes "the invisible body of man". This, H. P. Blavatsky adds, in square brackets, is his "*vital Linga Sharira*".

Dr. Besant writes in *The Seven Principles of Man* (1st ed. 1892, p. 11):

> The Linga Sharira is formed of matter rarer or more subtle than the matter which is perceptible to our five senses. This matter is called astral matter, as resembling that which fills space, and it is the state of matter which is just beyond our "solid, liquid and gas," and is characteristic of the "astral plane" immediately succeeding the "material plane," or the generally accepted objective universe. To this astral plane belong what are ordinarily called clairvoyance, clairaudience, many hypnotic phenomena—material enough, though manifesting in matter which is in a finer state than that which we can feel or see.

This use of the term, "astral," may surprise Theosophists, accustomed to the present usage. But in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and indeed in all Theosophical literature in her time the expression, " astral body," was used for the *linga sharira*, what is now called " the etheric double ". It is well to remember this when reading *The Secret Doctrine*. Of course, the word, " astral " was in use long before the Theosophical Society came into being.

> **The designation *astral* is ancient, and was used by some of the Neoplatonists. Porphyry describes the celestial body which is always joined with the soul as " immortal, luminous, and star-like ". The root of this word may be found, perhaps, in the Scythic *aist-aer*—which means star, or the Assyrian *Istar*, which, according to Burnouf has the same sense.**
>
> ***Isis Unveiled*, 1st ed., I, xxv.**

The name, 'Astral Light," is of modern origin, having according to *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 372) been invented by the Martinists, who, however, do not appear to have thought of it as matter, albeit in a state transcending our familiar solids, liquids and gases, but rather as a luminosity visible to clairvoyants and reminding them of starlight or, better, the Milky Way, " a luminous zone composed of myriad of small stars ". The name was then adopted by Éliphas Lévi and later by other Occultists.

But what is the Astral Light?

> **Thus, the true and " uncompromising " Kabalists admit that, for all purposes of Science and Philosophy, it is enough that the profane should know that the great Magic Agent—called by the followers of the Marquis de St. Martin, the Martinists, the Astral Light, by the mediaeval Kabalists and Alchemists the Sidereal Virgin and the Mysterium Magnum, and by the Eastern Occultists**

Aether, the reflection of Akasha—is that which the Church calls Lucifer.

***The Secret Doctrine* II, 537.**

It is this Aether in our composition that serves as the medium of transmission of electric impulses. Dr. L. R. Shepherd, broadcasting last April in the B.B.C. series, "Looking into Space," told listeners that Science now recognizes a *fourth* state of matter, "plasma"—quite a different thing to blood plasma—which is over and above the solid, liquid and gaseous states we learnt about in school. In it we find the electrons and protons which are the constituents of the atoms that make up solids, liquids and gases, but in plasma they are free and not held together in atoms.

This sub-atomic matter is the stuff of electricity, the stuff whose existence is manifested in electro-magnetic phenomena, which are nothing more or less than its movements and pressure, just as the existence of air is manifested by its blowing, that is, by its movements and pressure—the root-meaning of the word, "air" is "blower".

The word "plasma" has long been used in connection with electricity as the name for "a column of ionized gas," but it is now recognized that plasma is itself a state of matter independent of the gas, or, for that matter, liquid or solid, in which it may be present, and that, as plasma alone, it fills all space, even where no solid, liquid or gas exists, and constitutes the medium of transmission for light and for the etheric waves which reach us from other members of our solar system and indeed from distant stars and galaxies. The plasma in one's own body constitutes one's *linga sharira*.

"*Linga sharira*" is commonly translated as "subtle body," but the root-meaning of *linga* is "anything attaching to an object," and its secondary meaning is "characteristic," something attaching to one figuratively. Both these meanings are appropriate to the *linga sharira*: it is attached to the physical body; it has its characteristic form.

The Sanskrit for "subtle body" is *sukshma sharira*, which is in fact another name for the *linga sharira*.

If it were possible to freeze it and remove it *en bloc* from the body, it would be found to be in its configuration a perfect double of the body, not as a homogeneous block, as of ice or marble, but highly complex in its structure, being densest and most complex in the regions corresponding to the brain and the central nervous system and in lines corresponding to the nerves. Electric currents, which are but pulsations of this subtle matter in our bodies, carry from the cerebrum the fiat of the Thinker to do conscious action, and from the cerebellum the impulses which maintain the functions of *Prāna*.

> Man has two distinct physical brains; the cerebrum with its two hemispheres at the frontal part of the head—the source of the voluntary nerves; and the cerebellum, situated at the back portion of the skull—the fountain of the involuntary nerves which are the agents of the unconscious or mechanical powers of the mind to act through. And weak and uncertain as may be the control of man over his involuntary, such as the blood circulation, the throbbing of the heart and respiration, especially during sleep—yet how far more powerful, how much more potential appears man as master and ruler over the blind molecular motion—the *laws* which govern his body (a proof of this being afforded by the phenomenal powers of the Adept and even the common Yogi) than that which you *will* call God, shows over the immutable laws of Nature.
>
> *The Mahatma Letters*, p. 137.

Of course, it is not electric power that *drives* the human body. After all, the impulses are infinitesimal as compared with even those from the magneto of a car to the sparking plug and, as we know, the power that drives the car is generated in its engine, not its magneto. Although it is not understood how the power is generated by which the muscles connecting, for example, the ribs to the backbone are contracted so as to expand the chest in the action of breathing, we can be fairly certain that it is by internal combustion of some kind. And this must take place in the muscles concerned, because there is certainly no central engine in the body generating power to be transmitted to the various parts, as there is, say, in a car or a sewing machine. The generation of power is the most economical possible: in the very part that changes in any way—place, form, composition—and just the amount necessary for that change, whether it be that manifested in a boxer's knock-out punch or that in the flicker of an eyelid or, for that matter, even the segmentation of a single cell. It is as if, in a sewing machine, for each thrust downward of the needle-shaft, the power producing that thrust were generated in the shaft itself, and likewise for each movement of the shuttle and each push of the fabric-shift—would that I knew the right jargon!—in each case just the power necessary for that movement, measured to a nicety and generated there and then.

The electric impulses carried by the *linga sharira* merely serve to spark the combustion, or, rather, the complex series of combustions, by which even such a simple action as taking a step in walking is effected.

From what we know of electricity, some may regard it as questionable that an electric impulse of infinitesimal voltage could travel all the way from the brain to the feet. But we shall have to revise our thinking in this connection. It has been found that, if the temperature of a conductor is reduced to absolute zero, electric impulses will run along it without losing any of their strength on the way. If a cable were laid in an endless circle round the earth and all heat drained out of it to the last degree—supposing that were possible—an electric impulse of as little as one volt entering it at any point would go on circling round it in both directions without any loss of force as long as it remained in a caloric vacuum. It would seem that the molecular activity generated by heat creates friction for any etheric pulsation or movement passing along it, which, as a result, goes on losing force.

Now it may well be that there are other ways of creating perfect conductivity, and that in some such way the inside of a nerve fibre is constituted the perfect conductor it is known to be. Currents running along the nerves can travel any distance undiminished, and the *icchāshakti* (defined by T. Subba Row as " Literally *the power of the will.* Its *most ordinary manifestation* is the generation of certain nerve currents which set in motion such muscles as are required for the accomplishment of the desired object ") of a whale can operate to waggle its tail—which may be as much as a hundred feet from its brain—as effectively as to open its mouth.

So we see that the highly complex *linga sharira,* with its headquarters, appropriately, in the head and ramifications reaching to every cell in the body, is indeed the medium of transmission of the prānic forces to all parts of the body. Dr. Besant has written:

> **But just now we are concerned with Prāna only, with vitality, as the animating principle in all animal and human bodies. Of this life the Linga Sharira is the vehicle, acting, so to say, as means of communication, as bridge, between Prāna and the Sthula Sharira or physical body.**
>
> ***The Seven Principles of Man,* p. 17.**

But it is the vehicle of Prāna in an even fuller sense. It is the *seat* of Prāna. There cannot be force without there being something in which the force is present. And that something in which the prānic forces reside and from which they proceed is the *linga sharira,* a certain part of it. And that answers our first question.

Among all the marvels which Prāna performs the greatest is that by which the fertilized seed of plant or animal develops into a full-grown organism having so striking a likeness to its parents. The potentiality carried in that seed, which, in the case of man, is a microscopic cell, is an eternal wonder. Scientists have studied it very, very carefully in trying to discover its secrets, the study being chiefly, indeed almost entirely, that of its chemistry. It has been found to consist of millions of very long, thin molecules of deoxyribose nucleic acid (generally known as DNA). Each DNA molecule is made up of several genes. Prof. F. H. C. Crick, F.R.S., in a radio talk last July on " Genes and Atoms " had this to say about them:

> Every gene has probably about as much information on it as would be needed, say, to spell out a sonnet. But living organisms are complicated things, so their complete genetic message is a long one. Even for a small bacterial cell it may contain several million symbols. For human beings the number is much greater, perhaps as much as a thousand million symbols. This is enough information, in the technical sense, to write several hundred large books. All this information must be packed into the head of a sperm, an object far too small to be seen without a high-powered microscope. This is only possible because the message is written using atoms and molecules as symbols. . . .
>
> Will it ever be possible to synthesize the genetic material from scratch? There is no difficulty in principle to doing this: in practice, however, the problem looks horribly difficult. The chemistry is by no means easy, but we can look forward to the day when suitable synthetic processes will be available. The main difficulty is

to get the side-groups into the correct order. Even to synthesize one gene we need to arrange about 1,000 side-groups correctly. If we did this one step at a time we should have to carry out 1,000 successive chemical operations with very high accuracy and good yield. The chances of doing this are remote.

Of course they are. And the only effect of all that labor would be to modify one gene among millions. But the scientists have their heads in the wrong dustbin in their hunt for clues. It is as if a person, having seen and heard a tape-recorder pour forth a symphony and knowing that it all proceeded from the tape, were to set about to study its chemistry, meticulously scanning the needle-shaped atoms of the ferric oxide coating (which happens to be another polymer, like DNA) to discover the origins of the various sounds. He may even consider trying to make alterations in the symphony by modifying chemically the structure of those atoms. But he would find it an impossible task, whereas, if he were to use a super-material force, that of electro-magnetism, he could do it easily.

There have been philosophers and scientists who long ago had come to the conclusion that all the potentialities of the germinal cell are carried, *not* by its chemistry, but by super-material forces of some kind. We know now that they can be upset by radioactivity, a fact which surely confirms that view. Haeckel plumped for what he called "Plastidule Souls."

. . . this is what he says in explaining his newly-coined terminology: "Plastidule-Souls. The plastidules or protoplasmic molecules, the smallest homogeneous parts of the protoplasm, are on our plastid theory, to be regarded as the active factors of all life-functions. The plastidular soul differs from the inorganic molecular soul in that it possesses memory."

> **This he develops in his mirific lecture on the "Perigenesis of Plastidule, or the Wave-motions of Living Particles". It is an improvement on Darwin's theory of "Pangenesis," and a further approach, a cautious move towards "Magic". The former is a conjecture that: "Some of the actual identical atoms which formed part of ancestral bodies are thus transmitted through their descendants for generation after generation, so that we are literally 'flesh of the flesh' of the primeval creature who has developed into man"—explains the author of *A Modern Zoroastrian.* The latter, Occultism, teaches that—(*a*) the life-atoms of our (Prāna) Life-Principle are never entirely lost when a man dies. That the atoms best impregnated with the Life-Principle, an independent, eternal, conscious factor, are partially transmitted from father to son by heredity, and are partially drawn once more together and become the animating principle of the new body in every new incarnation of the Monads. Because (*b*), as the Individual Soul is ever the same, so are the atoms of the lower principles (the body, its astral, or life-double, etc), drawn as they are by affinity and Karmic law always to the same individuality in the series of various bodies.**
>
> ***The Secret Doctrine,* II, 709.**

These are the permanent atoms of Theosophical teaching, and we see their purpose. In one's astral body—H. P. Blavatsky uses that as a name for the *linga sharira*—there are atoms, not one but millions of them, which have been part of one's being in every incarnation from the beginning of one's evolution. It is in them that the prānic forces are present which operate to produce all the wonders of Prāna in life after life.

As for their prodigious memories, whereby the new personality of an Ego comes to resemble so closely its personality in its last incarnation (the Master K. H. has said: "The 'old being' is the sole parent—father and mother at once—of the 'new being'. It is the former who is the creator and fashioner, of the latter, in reality; and far more so in plain truth, than any father in flesh." (*The Mahatma Letters*, p. 111) or even the memory which Haeckel believes his "plastidule souls" to possess and by virtue of which a person's physical resemblance to his parents, even parents he may never have seen, can be so striking, we need no longer be overwhelmed with wonder when the tape-recording which we ourselves can make manifests an equally perfect memory, reproducing with startling fidelity every note, every nuance to tone, of the symphony as originally played.

It is said that in the new industrial revolution, which automation has ushered in, it has become possible to record electronically "information" about complex industrial processes and set the records to direct the machines in carrying on with those processes, which could be made to include the rebuilding of the machines themselves.

If such a record were put in storage, well insulated, the electro-magnetic powers given to it would be retained by it indefinitely, so that, if it were taken out after thousands of years, it could, if supplied with the necessary materials, be made to rebuild all the machines which had been used for the various industrial processes, and these could, with the appropriate records, be made to repeat those processes.

An incredibly wonderful invention, worthy of all the superlatives thought up by the publicity people of Hollywood! But there is nothing that Man can invent which Nature has not thought of already and has in fact had in regular use for untold aeons. Our permanent atoms are just such recordings, and the atoms of the germinal cell carry the pattern of what the fully grown organism is to be, down to the least and last detail. The very hairs of your head are all numbered, but not in the mind of some omniscient God.

It is the particular faculty of the involuntary power of the infinite mind—which no one could ever think of calling God—to be eternally evolving subjective matter into objective atoms (you will please remember that the two adjectives are used but in a relative sense) or cosmic matter to be later on developed into form. And it is likewise that same involuntary mechanical power that we see so intensely active in all the fixed laws of nature—which governs and controls what is called the Universe or the Cosmos. There are some modern philosophers who would prove the existence of a Creator from motion. We say and affirm that that motion—the universal perpetual motion which never ceases never slackens nor increases its speed not even during the interludes between the pralayas, or "night of Brahma" but goes on like a mill set in motion, whether it has anything to grind or not (for the pralaya means the temporary loss of every form, but by no means the destruction of cosmic matter which is eternal)—we say this perpetual motion is the only eternal and uncreated Deity we are able to recognize.

***The Mahatma Letters*, p. 138.**

Perpetual motion is something we should have become accustomed to by now. For as long as we can remember we have had it in our daily lives in the recurring rising and setting of the sun. And the odds are that, for all the terrifying powers of destruction which Man's newly-acquired command over nuclear fission has put in his hands, our earth will go on spinning for aeons to come.

Such perpetual motion is to be found in our permanent atoms, a motion which goes on ceaselessly even when there is "nothing to grind," no physical body to keep alive. The engine of physical life goes on ticking over even when it is not geared to the wheels, when, in fact, there *are* no wheels—and no car, for that matter—for it to be geared to.

So, while the *linga sharira* as a whole constitutes the medium of transmission of the prānic forces to the various parts of the body in which they are seen to operate, there are parts of it, "the atoms best impregnated with the Life-Principle," which are the seat and fountainhead of those forces and carry them, not only throughout this life, but also from life to life throughout our being as Egos. It is in every sense of the expression, the "Vehicle of Prāna".

They constitute a faithful record of the karma, the "doings," of one's entire past, being forces which have been slowly building up during the untold aeons of one's existence as mineral, vegetable, animal and man (even today we are adding to them—the prāna and the physical body of an advanced man are not quite the same as those of one less advanced) and manifest themselves in all that one does mechanically in the present. And this includes the development of the body.

> **Take the human foetus. From the moment of its first planting until it completes its seventh month of gestation it repeats in miniature the mineral, vegetable, and animal cycles it passed through in its previous encasements, and only during the last two, develops its future human entity.**
>
> ***The Mahatma Letters*, pp. 88-9.**

But it is not beyond the powers of the human spirit to obtain command over the forces of *Prāna*. Read again the passage from page 137 of *The Mahatma Letters* quoted earlier in this chapter, especially that part where the Master speaks of the potential mastery of man, as manifested in Adepts and even common Yogis, over the blind molecular motion—the *laws* which govern his body. The purpose of Yoga, the path of self-discipline, is to obtain mastery over, not only one's prānic forces, but also those which govern all one's thoughts, emotions and volitions. The labors called for are prodigious, but so also, we are assured, will the fruits be found to be when in due season they are gathered in.

CHAPTER VIII

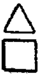
THE SACRED SEVEN

The Master K. H. has written:

> **"... the Greek philosopher who maintained that the Universe was a huge animal penetrated the symbolical significance of the Pythagorean monad (which becomes two, then three △ and finally, having become the tetraktis or the perfect square, thus evolving out of itself *four* and involuting three , forms the sacred seven)—and thus was far in advance of all the scientific men of the present time."**
>
> ***ML*, 63.**

The Secret Doctrine helps us to understand what all this means. In Vol. II, p. 625, we read:

> **"SAPTAPARNA. Such is the name given in Occult phraseology to man. It means, as shown elsewhere, a seven-leaved plant, and the name has a great significance in the Buddhist legends. ... the figure 7 is the symbol of the same (earthly) life *linked* with Divine Life, the double glyph expressed in geometrical figures being —a Triangle and a Quaternary, the symbol of Septenary Man."**



The triangle represents Spirit, the Father, and the Square, Matter, the Mother,[1] the two together constituting

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[1] The Latin "materia" is derived from "mater"—mother.

" the Father-Mother Seven " which make life in manifestation possible, and in the absence of any one of which that life could not be. We shall see why. On the next page we read:

> Numbers 3 and 4 are respectively male and female, Spirit and Matter, and their union is the emblem of Life Eternal in Spirit on its ascending arc, and in Matter as the ever resurrecting Element —by procreation and reproduction. . . . The 3 is invisible; the 4 is on the plane of objective perception. This is why all the Matter of the Universe, when analyzed to its ultimates by Science, can be reduced to four Elements only—Carbon, Oxygen, Nitrogen, and Hydrogen: and why the three primaries, the noumena of the four, or graduated Spirit or Force, have remained a *terra incognita*, and mere speculations, mere names, to exact Science. Her servants must believe in and study first the primary causes, before they can hope to fathom the nature, and acquaint themselves with the potentialities, of the effects. Thus, while the men of Western learning had, and still have, the four, or Matter, to toy with, the Eastern Occultists and their diciples, the great Alchemists the world over, have the whole septenate to study from. As those Alchemists have it:

> *When the Three and the Four kiss each other, the Quaternary joins its middle nature with that of the Triangle [or Triad, i.e., the face of one of its plane surfaces becoming the middle face of the other], and becomes a Cube; then only does it [the Cube unfolded] become the vehicle and the number of Life, the Father-Mother Seven.*

"The following diagram will perhaps assist the student to grasp these parallelisms:

HUMAN PRINCIPLES		PRINCIPLES OF PHYSICAL NATURE
7. Ātmā. 6. Buddhi. 5. Manas.		
4. Kāma Rūpa; the principle of animal desire, which burns fiercely during life in Matter, resulting in satiety; it is inseparable from animal existence.	HYDROGEN	The lightest of all gases; it burns in Oxygen, giving off the most intense heat of any substance in combustion, and forming water, the most stable of compounds; Hydrogen enters largely into all organic compounds.
3. Linga Sharīra; the inert vehicle or form on which the body is moulded; the vehicle of Life. It is dissipated very shortly after the disintegration of the body.	NITROGEN	An inert gas; the vehicle with which Oxygen is mixed to adapt the latter for animal respiration; it also enters largely into all organic substances.
2. Prāna; Life, the active power producing all vital phenomena.	OXYGEN	The supporter of combustion; the life-giving gas, the active chemical agent in all organic life.
1. The gross matter of the body; the substance formed and moulded over the Linga Sharīra (Chhāyā) by the action of Prāna.	CARBON	The fuel *par excellence*; the basis of all organic substances, the (chemical) element which forms the largest variety of compounds."

These are "parallelisms" only: it is not suggested that the physical body is composed entirely of Carbon, any more than Kāma Rūpa is of Hydrogen. As every man, taken as a whole, is a Saptaparna (a "Heptad" or "Hebdomad," to use the Gnostic and Kabalistic terms), so also is *every single cell of his physical body*, and the two lists on opposite sides of the

Table show us the parallelisms: just as the activities of a man's "human principles" culminate in what he does by means of his physical body, so the activities of "the principles of physical nature" in the cell culminate in the reaction of Carbon.

The statement, "all the Matter of the Universe, when analyzed to its ultimates by Science, can be reduced to four Elements only—Carbon, Oxygen, Nitrogen and Hydrogen," will be found puzzling. What could H. P. Blavatsky have meant by that? Remember—as is clear from the context—that she is considering the problem which a cosmic inventor would be faced with in trying to devise a machine that Spirit could work to operate on Matter. Of what materials must that machine be constructed so that, on the one hand, Spirit could work it, and, on the other, it could move, and otherwise effect change in, physical matter? Having examined all the materials available in the Universe, such an inventor would find that there was only one possible choice for him: a combination of hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen and carbon. And indeed the machine that was actually devised—and has proved eminently efficient for its purpose—does in fact consist of those four elements, which constitute, according to reliable analysis, 96% of the human body. The other 4% consists of many other elements—calcium, phosphorus, iron, etc.—but these take no operative part in the working of the machine, any more than the mudguards, bell, light and grips on a bicycle do in the working of the latter machine.

The Secret Doctrine was written more than seventy-five years ago, but what we read here—"the men of Western learning had, and still have, the four, or Matter, to toy with" —is still largely true today. Dr. Bronowski presents the view of Modern Science in an article in *The New York Times*

Magazine (October 13th, 1963) where, in reference to "the four basic life substances in human cells," he writes:

> **These substances are the letters in the alphabet of life of the higher animals. There are four of these basic letters, and each is made up of atoms of carbon, nitrogen, oxygen and hydrogen. Chromosomes are built like words from these basic letters of life, repeated in different combinations over and over again.**

These " words," the genes in the *germinal* cell, carry, we are told by scientists, the " instructions " for the development of the entire physical body which is to grow from that cell. The first thing it does is to divide into two cells, from one of which the right half of the body develops, from the other, the left. So presumably the " instructions " for the development of each of these halves are carried by the genes of the appropriate cell. But look at this: if the two cells are detached from each other, each of them develops into, not half a body, but a complete individual. In the course of a BBC radio symposium under the general title, " Cells and Embryos," Dr. Lewis Wolpert of London University, described " the classic experiment carried out at the end of the last century by Hans Driesch ".

> **He took a sea urchin egg when it had just divided into two, separated the two cells, and allowed them to develop separately. To his surprise, he found that each developed into, not half an animal, but a complete but smaller embryo. This result so surprised Driesch that he was driven to metaphysical or vitalistic concepts in order to explain it, and he invoked a mysterious life force known as entelechy.[1]**

Driesch, we see, found himself forced to the conclusion that there was something *which formed no part of the chemistry of*

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[1] Leibnitz, like Aristotle, calls the " created " or *emanated* Monads (the Elementals issued from Cosmic Spirits or Gods) Entelechies, Ἐντελέχειαι, and " incorporeal automata ". (*SD.*, I, 692.)

the cell, something in the nature of Spirit, that controlled the development of the individual from the germinal cell. Prof. Maynard Smith, also of London University, another contributor to the symposium, described an experiment made by the French embryologist, Sengel.

> **What Sengel in fact did was to remove small patches of skin from developing chicks and grow them in isolation in a Petri dish . . . The interesting experiments were those in which, when he removed the piece of skin, there was just the first faint trace of the developing feather visible—not a real bump, but just a slightly more closely and densely packed group of cells where a feather was to develop. The first thing that would happen would be that these little beginnings of feather papillae would actually disappear, so that the sheet of skin would appear to be optically completely homogeneous. And then new feather papillae, new bumps, would appear in quite new places. Supposing, for example, that he took off a piece of skin in which there was on the left, let us say, a row of papillae, but on the right a naked area, the first thing that would happen would be that the visible structures would disappear; and then new papillae would appear right down the middle of the piece of skin (even though that particular area might be one where normally there would be no feather); and then a second row would appear either side of the first; and so on.**

In a word, if the feather papillae were asymmetrically arranged in respect to the piece of skin removed, they soon disappeared, and new ones appeared symmetrically arranged. It was quite obvious that there was something, quite independent of the DNA molecules in the cells, that insisted on symmetry in the developing embryo, regardless of the "instructions" in the genes, and would not tolerate the development of half a body by itself, or of even an asymmetrical piece of skin.

So scientists, although they still have only "the four to toy with," have a shrewd suspicion that the four do not make up the whole story. Dr. Adam Curtis, yet another contributor to the symposium from London University, said:

> Supposing we think of the developing embryo as being like an industrial organization. As a result of our investigations we now know that certain machines, called DNA, are involved in making individual products of the factory. But we are very much less certain who the management is and how orders are passed down from the head office to the machines to produce this or that protein. Of course, the machines might be self-controlling. In other words, some part of the DNA might control the sequence in which other parts build different types of protein. But we have some evidence that DNA is not the only system which controls development.

The conclusion, thus, is that *not all* the "instructions"—and possibly none at all—proceed from the DNA molecules. Where then are they issued from? Prof. Maynard Smith puts forward a theory which avoids getting involved in mysticism and entelechies.

> A possible answer to this question was suggested some years ago by the mathematician Turing. What Turing in fact showed was that you can get waves not only in water or, for example, in air (sound waves), or electromagnetic waves (that is, light and radio waves and so on): you can also get *chemical* waves, in which there are peaks of high concentration, and troughs where no chemical substance is present at all. Of course, Turing showed this theoretically—he did not show it experimentally: in rather the same way that Clerk Maxwell showed that electromagnetic waves could, at least in theory, exist: and Hertz later showed that they did in fact exist. Now the generation of a chemical wave, of the kind suggested by Turing, is really just the kind of mechanism we want to explain the patterning of feather papillae on the surface of the bird.

This is like a detective grilling a suspect, X, while leaning all the time on the real culprit, Y—passing unsuspected—whose evidence he keeps on adducing in his efforts to inculpate X. What need is there to hypothesize *chemical* waves when electromagnetic waves, whose existence has already been clearly proved, can be shown to be the real—no, not culprit, but—*deus ex machina.* The Master K. H. has written:

> **The Sun is neither a *solid* nor a *liquid*, nor yet a gaseous glow; but a gigantic ball of electromagnetic Forces, the store-house of universal *life* and *motion*, from which the latter pulsate in all directions, feeding the smallest atom as the greatest genius with the same material unto the end of the *Maha Yug*.**
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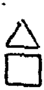
> ***ML*, 161-2.**

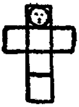
Here we have the waves Prof. Maynard Smith has been looking for: electromagnetic pulsations feeding every smallest atom on earth. Feeding also Sengel's piece of chicken skin and Driesch's sea urchin egg. Are we to understand then that the pattern of what that egg was to develop into was stored in the Sun? Not necessarily, any more than the pattern of what develops from playing a tape-recording was stored in the power house from which emanated the electric current used in playing it. This latter pattern was stored in the tape by electromagnetism in making the recording. And that brings us back to " the three," the Pythagorean triangle. In *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 681) H. P. Blavatsky quotes the following passage written by T. Subba Row:

> **You may gather some idea *as to the way* in which the various elements start into existence from these three principles into which Mulaprakriti [the Pythagorean Triangle] is differentiated, by examining the lecture delivered by Professor Crookes a short time ago upon the so-called elements of modern chemistry.**

The words in square brackets were added by H. P. Blavatsky as a gloss. Although at the time *The Secret Doctrine* was written " the three primaries " were, as said in a passage quoted earlier, " a *terra incognita* to exact Science," the discoveries made since then by scientists have established that all the elements are evolved from three subatomic particles, to which have been given the names: protons, electrons and neutrons. Obviously, then, these are " the three principles " into which Mulaprakriti is differentiated, and from which the various elements of Matter, including " the four," are evolved. Indeed we know now what particular combination of " the three " gives us each of " the four ": Hydrogen consists of a single proton circled by a single electron; Carbon, a nucleus consisting of a cluster of 6 protons and 6 neutrons, circled by 6 electrons; Nitrogen, 7, 7 and 7; Oxygen, 8, 8 and 8. That explains " thus evolving out of itself *four* and involuting three ". The four are evolved by different " involutes " or combinations of the three, a truth that is represented diagrammatically as a triangle within a square, .



But *The Secret Doctrine* has a triangle *over* a square. This represents *another* great truth, expressed in the paragraph in italics in the passage quoted earlier—H. P. Blavatsky commonly uses italics when quoting a High Occult Authority. Read it again. Yes, you may well scratch your head in trying to make sense of its geometry. But you will be glad to know that it is explained with a diagram further on in *The Secret Doctrine.*



> While there are but 6 faces to a cube, the representation of the cross as the cube unfolded, as to the cross-bars, displays one face of the cube *as common to two bars*, counted as belonging to either [i.e., once counted horizontally, and once vertically]; . . . 4 for the upright, and 3 for the cross-bar, making *seven* in all.
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> *SD*, II, 634.

If you still find it baffling, do this: Take a cubical carton and cut it open along *seven* edges: *three* around its top face and the *four* upright ones. Open out the carton and you should have the cross shown in the diagram. Now paint the upright of the cross one colour—say, green—and, on the reverse side, the cross-bar another colour—red. If the ends of the upright are brought together, as also the ends of the cross-bar, *with the coloured side out in each case*, you get a triangle over a square, or, more accurately, a triangular prism over a square prism, one face of the latter being also the middle face of the former. It is worth while doing all this because the result represents a profound and most vital truth.

Now the Pythagorean triangle, whether *within* the square or *over* it, represents the three subatomic particles: protons, electrons and neutrons. *Within* the square they are the basic ingredients of the four vital elements, as indeed of *all* elements. But there are other subatomic particles which remain *free*—that is, unorganized into atoms—and are the stuff of electromagnetism. It is these that are represented by the triangle *over* the square—as also the triangle in the Table—standing for the Spirit that controls Matter. The Master K. H. has said, " Spirit and matter are *one*, being but a differentiation of states, not of *essences* " (*ML*, 63). In fact it is *because* they are the same in essence that they can affect each other.

In the Table there are no names for the first three of " The Principles of Physical Nature," because, when *The Secret Doctrine* was written, the names—protons, electrons and neutrons—had not been invented. Nor are there any descriptions of the parts played by " the three " in physical nature. However, it is clear from what we are told that, as with the four, each of the three plays an indispensable part in Life.

As we can, with the help of the descriptions given in the Table, form a satisfactory picture of the parts played by each of the four, let us look at those and so get the lower part of the over-all picture sketched in. Hydrogen is " the lightest of all gases," consisting of a single proton circled by a single electron. This is most important. There is no doubt that the " kiss " which the three give the four is electro-magnetic, but the impulse is so infinitesimal that the only matter that could be stirred by it is Hydrogen. So Hydrogen, clearly, is the face of the Quaternary which coincides with the middle face of the Triad. The stirring of the Hydrogen in the cell brings it into contact with the Oxygen and so starts combustion of the former in the latter, " giving off the most intense heat of any substance in combustion ". In this way electric energy is transformed into heat, but far more efficiently than by the method employed in our electric heaters and cookers. Indeed Nature's method gives the maximum heat obtainable by any method. All the same the degree of heat produced is very little, but Carbon is " the fuel *par excellence*," the element that is most sensitive to heat, even the slightest increase in temperature, reacting soonest and to the greatest extent. A most valuable property! But it has another which is equally valuable: it is " the basis of all organic substances, the (chemical) element which forms the largest variety of compounds ". Julian Huxley gives the underlying reason for the two truths contained in this statement:

> Complex organic molecules are only possible through the property possessed by carbon of linking its atoms in series, to form long chains or rings or ladders. The separate carbon links may have different side-chains attached to them, so that an immense variety of chemical construction is possible.
>
> *Evolution in Action*, p. 25.

Were it not for this property of Carbon, there would not be organic tissue of any kind, whether of animal or plant. "So far as we know, there cannot be life anywhere in the universe without carbon atoms." (Dr. Bronowski).

We see then how valuable Hydrogen, Oxygen and Carbon are. But what right has Nitrogen to be in the group, sitting pretty among the sacred seven? It is "the vehicle with which Oxygen is mixed to adapt the latter for animal respiration," and, as such, it is indispensable. These four elements, then, constitute the perfect grouping whereby Matter can be made to respond to Spirit, the number employed being the viable minimum and each member being unsurpassable for its job. Hence the expression, "the perfect square," repeatedly used by the Master.

The operation easiest to understand of all those that take place in animal cells is a muscle cell contracting in response to orders from the brain. We know that the orders are conveyed by means of electric impulses running along the nerves. Those impulses are, as we have seen, transformed in the cell into heat, which makes the chain of carbon molecules in the cell tighten, thus resulting in the contraction of the muscle. How infinitesimal the time taken by the whole series of operations is may be judged by watching the twinkling fingers of a pianist playing.

I have used the expression "orders are conveyed," and we commonly hear of "instructions" or "messages" being sent from the brain to the muscles. But these expressions are as inappropriate as if we spoke of a boatman, when in casting off he flicks the rope to disengage the loop at the end of it from the bollard on the pier, as "sending an order" to that loop. It has no brain to enable it to read an order and put it into effect. Actually, he *exerts a force* which, running along the rope, effects what he intends. In the same way the pianist exerts a force from his mind which, running to his fingers, makes them depress the keys intended at the moments intended to the extent intended in each case. That force is applied by way of "the three" and the problem is to know how they operate so as to have precisely the intended effects on all the muscles concerned, those of the fingers in particular, but also those of the wrists, the arms and other parts of the body. If only we knew how "the three" operate in effecting this *comparatively* simple action of muscle contraction—we have already looked at the operations of "the four"—we might be enabled to understand how they ring the changes to effect the immense variety of operations which take place in organic cells—red blood cells, for example, in forming, collect atoms of iron; white blood cells, calcium—and we might even get a clue as to where the managerial orders emanate from when they don't proceed from the conscious mind.

The melancholy truth is that, when it comes to "the three," as against "the four," we find ourselves in the dark. If the discoveries made by scientists during this century had been made before *The Secret Doctrine* was written, we may possibly have had in the Table given earlier, in place of the triangle, the names of the three, and, where there is a blank in the right-hand column, some descriptions of the parts played by them respectively, because H. P. Blavatsky might have had words at her disposal in terms of which those descriptions could have been given.

It is of no use turning to the scientists for help in our present need: they too are groping around in the dark trying to get their hands on the facts. From time to time they emerge to propound a theory, which, in spite of its being emphasized that it is only a theory, is pounced on by the public as unassailable fact—until it crumples when assailed, and a new theory has to be erected to take its place. I find my mind going back to a conversation that is said to have once taken place between a university professor and a lady interested in his work. She remarked that he must find it bothersome having to think up new questions every term to set at the examinations, but he replied, "Not at all. We ask the same questions year after year," and then, seeing her look of speechless amazement, he added, "Ah! but we catch them all the same. You see, dear lady, we keep on changing the answers."

But let us see what else Occultism has to tell us about the three. The Master K. H. wrote in another letter:

> **Pythagoras had a reason for never using the finite, useless figure—2, and for altogether discarding it. The ONE, can, when manifesting, become only 3. The unmanifested when a simple duality remains passive and concealed. The dual monad (the 7th and 6th principles) has, in order to manifest itself as a *Logos*, the 'Kwan-shai-yin,' to first become a *triad* (7th, 6th and half of the 5th); then, on the bosom of the 'Great Deep,' attracting within itself the *One Circle*, form out of it the perfect Square, thus 'squaring the circle'—the greatest of all the mysteries, friend. . . . The 'Deep' is *Space*—both male and female. . . . The One reality is *mulaprakriti* (undifferentiated Substance)—the Rootless root.**
>
> ***ML*, 341.**

"Mula" means "root," which explains why the Master speaks of Mulaprakriti as the "Rootless root," that which, itself springing from nothing else, is what everything else springs from. It is the Great Deep,[1] the "dry waters" of Space. It is only when, breathed on by Purusha, it differentiates, that it become Prakriti, active Substance.

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[1] Scientists too speak, quite independently of the Occultists, of Space being an *ocean* of hydrogen nuclei—protons.

> **Occult Science teaches that the 'Mother' [mater-ia] lies stretched in Infinity, during Pralaya, as the great Deep, the '*dry* Waters of Space,' according to the quaint expression in the *Catechism*, and becomes *wet* only after the separation and the moving over its face[1] of Nārāyana [another name for Purusha].**
>
> ***SD*, I, 686.**

The one becoming threefold is mentioned also in *The Book of Dzyan*. Part of Stanza VII reads:

> **When the One becomes Two, the Threefold appears, and the Three are One; and it is our Thread, O Lanoo, the Heart of the Man-Plant called Saptaparna. It is the Root that never dies; the Three-tongued Flame of the Four Wicks.**

"Root" again. And we have no difficulty in recognizing the "Three-tongued Flame" and "the Four Wicks". It is about the *manner* of differentiation of the One into the Three that we want to know more. Now Dr. Bronowski has written in the article quoted from earlier:[2]

> **The birth began in a young star. A young star is a mass of hydrogen nuclei—that is, of protons—and because the star is hot, the protons are moving about very fast. From time to time, one proton runs headlong into another and overcomes the electrical repulsion between them. When this happens, one of the protons loses its electric charge and changes into a neutron, and the pair cling together as a single nucleus of a substance called deuterium, or heavy hydrogen.**

But the electric charge does not cease to be. It now takes on a separate existence as an electron with, surprisingly, a *negative* charge of electricity. Is *this* the differentiation of Mulaprakriti? It certainly looks like it because, where hitherto we had only protons, we now have protons, neutrons and electrons: One becoming Three.

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[1] That seems to ring a bell—"And the spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters". Genesis, I, 1.

[2] The article is reprinted in condensed form in *The Reader's Digest* for February, 1964. (Brit. ed.)

Occult Science, however, gives another *cause* for the differentiation. Modern Science, it will be noticed, regards the coming together of the protons as *accidental*. It is puzzled to understand *why* they should: after all, protons in Space do not normally go on coalescing. Indeed they *cannot*, since they all carry positive charges of electricity and so repel each other. How is the repulsion overcome? To account for this the theory is put forward that in a particular region of Space there had been a concentration of protons, which, hot and agitated, rushed around at speeds sufficient to overcome their natural repulsion for one another and bring them into contact. But Occultism gives another explanation for their coalescing.

> **You must take each entity at its starting point in the manvantaric course as the primordial cosmic atom already differentiated by the first flutter of the manvantaric life breath. . . . Drawn by its '*chemical* affinity '(?) to coalesce with other like atoms, the aggregate sum of such united atoms will in time become a man-bearing globe after the stages of the cloud, the spiral and the sphere of fire-mist and of the condensation, consolidation, shrinkage and cooling of the planet have been successively passed through. . . . We will call the primordial atom A. This being not a circumscribed centre of activity but the initial point of a manvantaric whirl of evolution, gives birth to new centres which we may term B, C, D, etc., incomputably.**
>
> ***ML*, 87-8.**

We are told here that a single cosmic atom, activated by the manvantaric life breath (Purusha), differentiates and coalesces with another. The differentiation takes place *before* it coalesces, and indeed allows of it doing so. So there is no need to hypothesize any concentration of protons anywhere, nor all this about their running into one another. That centre of activity, A, gives birth to other centres *incomputably.* The process of nuclear fusion is carried on *ad infinitum* by chain reaction, other cosmic atoms catching the infection and differentiating in order to coalesce, and not as a result of accidental collisions.

Nuclear fusion is carried further to produce in course of time—nearly half a manvantara—the other elements of matter, but all still in the form of a " sphere of fire-mist," the condensation, consolidation, shrinkage and cooling of which results in a planet, which evolves in due course into a man-bearing globe.

This, clearly, is the " squaring of the circle " a process which takes thousands of millions of years. Mulaprakriti, the " *one* element," eternal and unending, hence, the " One Circle," differentiates into three, from which evolve the four, the " perfect square," the materials required for building living organisms—in particular, man. But it all remains still a mystery for the most part. On the one hand, scientific knowledge of subatomic particles is in a state of flux, and nothing is yet quite definite about all this. On the other hand, it is not always easy to relate scientific information with Occult teaching, which, in matters of the deepest import, is commonly " scrambled," the layman having to exercise his own insight to unscramble it. The Master K. H. has written: " If any one can unravel it from such tangled threads as are given him, very well; and a fine proof it would indeed be of his or her spiritual insight." (*ML.* 342).

There is so much that we have yet to find out: what precisely " the three " are into which Mulaprakriti differentiates, and *how* it differentiates into them; more particularly, how

" the three " ring the changes to effect all the multifarious operations that we find going on in organic cells. It is only when the light of the human mind has penetrated to all this, that the greatest of all the mysteries of life will stand revealed.

CHAPTER IX

ALL THAT MAKES A MAN

> *In the light of evolutionary biology man can now see himself as the sole agent of further evolutionary advance on this planet, and one of the few possible instruments of progress in the universe at large. He finds himself in the unexpected position of business manager for the cosmic process of evolution.*
>
> —Sir Julian Huxley

In my mind's eye I see Sir Julian whistling and gazing at the landscape, trying to look as if he doesn't know what a question he has raised which is shrieking for an answer, but which he has coolly ignored: Who or what is the unnamed employer for whom man is sole agent, the unnamed user of man as an instrument, the unnamed director for whom man is business manager? And yet the question is answered, clearly and without equivocation, by occult science, which, however, sees a different business relationship between man and the unnamed principle: that of son-executive for a father-director in a family business, a relationship that is even closer than that generally existing between the two in a family business in real life. It is as if such a father were to tell his son: "Look my son, you know my mind fully: what my policy is and the means I use to implement it. Use your own judgment in deciding what to do and how to do it. Our minds have become so well attuned to each other that your decisions, if made after careful thought, will thereby have become aligned with my own thinking on the matter in question. You need no directives from me, written or spoken."

Occult science tells us who—or, more correctly, what—this father-director is:

> **The Monad of every living being . . . *is an individual Dhyan Chohan distinct from others with a kind of spiritual Individuality of its own*, during one special Manvantara. Its Primary, the Spirit (*Atman*), is one, of course, with the One Universal Spirit (*Paramatma*), but the Vehicle (*Vahan*) it is enshrined in, the *Buddhi*, is part and parcel of that Dhyan-Chohanic Essence.**

This Universal *Atma-Buddhi* is referred to by the Master Morya:

> **You will easily understand what is meant by the 'one and only' element or principle in the universe and that *androgynous* . . . the great dragon eternity biting with its *active* head its *passive* tail, from the emanations of which spring worlds, beings, and things.**

The one and only element is, of course, *Akasha*, in which all the aims and aspirations of the Dhyan Chohans and all mankind are preserved, and in which is also preserved the Universal *Buddhi*, " the synthetic aggregation of all the Dhyan Chohans, as of all other intelligences, whether great or small, that ever were, are or will be."

It is only in the light of the truth that man is the sole son-executive of this father-director that we can fully appreciate what the indispensable qualifications for that position would be, and see what the cardinal principles are that make a man.

Look at them first on the *literal* side of our simile, that is, in the father-son relationship in a real family business. In order that the son may be such that his father would address him in the words given above, his mind must be at one with his father's: faced with a problem, he would be moved by the same aims and purposes and would draw upon the same intelligence and know-how. If the problem proved difficult, he would, in pondering over it, put himself in communion, telepathically, with his father and, in that way, obtain inspiration and guidance from him in the matter—as indeed such a son would *actually* do in real life if he and his father were in the habit of thinking along the same lines.

So we discern three cardinal factors that qualify the son to be truly an executive agent for his father—remember, we are still on the literal side of our simile. He has (1) a sound fabric of policy in carrying on the business; (2) an ample fund of experience and know-how with regard to it; and (3) a mind that is agile enough to tackle with ease the average problems arising in connection with it and, in the case of more difficult ones, capable of getting in touch with his father's mind, telepathically, for guidance.

Now—moving over to the *figurative* side—these three factors are in fact to be found in every mature man (mature, that is, not only in body, but also in humanhood) and constitute his *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*. He has evolved (1) a purpose in life, or rather a fabric of purposes which, having been consciously resolved on by him at some time in the past, in this life or a preceding one, remain latent in what is loosely called the "subconscious," to reappear in the consciousness when appropriate to determine the courses of action he takes (the purposes which men determine on are numberless, but examples would be: to live a clean and healthy life; to have consideration for others; (2) a fund of experience and intelligence that he uses in achieving his purposes; and (3) a mind having the necessary agility to deal with life's problems.

Huxley has called the first two factors "conscious purpose" and "cumulative experience," and he sees them as inseparable from a person's mind. But occult science would demur at the word "conscious," because it is at pains to stress that *Atma-Buddhi* has continuous existence, whether or not it manifests in the conscious mind, which is something distinct from both *Atma* and *Buddhi*. Indeed, lay science may be said to concede that point when it speaks of a "subconsciousness" in which all such purposes and intelligence remain latent.

Occult science teaches that, just as all the aims and aspirations, as also the intelligences, of all beings are recorded in *Akasha* in the Universal *Atma-Buddhi*, so those of any individual person are also recorded in the *akashic* nimbus over his head as his personal *Atma-Buddhi*, which is his true Ego, characterizing everything he does. This is quite as distinct from his conscious mind as the tapes played on a tape-recorder are from the machine itself. *Manas*, the conscious mind, is in fact the machine that turns them into consciousness as the need arises. When a person has a problem to deal with, however small—say, that of a driver on a busy road considering whether to overtake the car in front—the relevant parts of his *Atma-Buddhi* emerge into his conscious mind. In our example, our driver (if his *Atma-Buddhi* is in fact as we assume) would have consideration for the safety of the occupants of the car in front and of those following him and, if he decides to overtake the car, would use his know-how as a driver to do so efficiently.

A person having to deal with a more complex problem—for example, composing a poem or a sonata, inventing a new machine, formulating a policy for an organization—would, in pondering deeply over it, be likely to put himself *en rapport* with the global *Atma-Buddhi* and, perhaps, derive inspiration from there, enabling him to make decisions with regard to it.

Now, in order to do anything, he must do something with his *physical* body, even if it is no more than dictating instructions for his secretary to pass on to the people concerned. As soon as he starts to do so, he brings into play three other factors which must operate in order that the physical body can be made to function. First, his *kama rupa*, made up of instinctive physical urges and the will to do anything *physically*. This comes into operation when he intends his hand to pick up the microphone or his dictaphone, an intention which is effected by the operation of a large number of muscles in his arm, hand and fingers. But he does not *consciously* operate any of those muscles. Consider, by way of contrast, what the driver of a mechanical shovel does in effecting his intention of moving a shovelful of earth. He first swings the jib around to the position over the soil; then he opens the jaws of the grab; then lowers the arm until the jaws are plunged into the soil; then closes the jaws; then raises the arm; then swings the jib around to a position over the truck; then lowers the arm; then opens the jaws—all these operations being directed *consciously*, one at a time. If a man's physical movements had to be done in the same way, human life as we know it would be impossible. But every human body has a built-in automation whereby every movement willed by a person is effected. If the mechanical shovel had such an automation, all that would be necessary for the driver to do would be to *will* that it should pick up a shovelful of earth and deposit it in the truck: the automation would then take over and direct the necessary operations.

This automation, which, as we have seen, is an indispensable principle in a man, is called *prana*. When we consider how complex the muscular operations are in what we do physically—in none so much as in ordinary speech—we can appreciate how wonderful *prana* is. And it is concerned, not only with the actions that we consciously will, but also with all the complex operations of all the organs of the body, which the conscious mind not only does not will but commonly is not even aware of.

That brings us to yet another *indispensable principle* in man, consisting of a mass of know-how for the physical body, carried by what is called the *linga-sharira.* It corresponds to the mass of tapes in a factory's automation system which, according to the selection made by the automation-governor (corresponding to *prana*), play back to effect the appropriate operations in the factory.

I spoke a little earlier of a " built-in "automation in the physical body. But in truth much of it is developed by one as one goes through life. A youngster learning to dive wills his body to propel itself neatly into the water—but what it actually does is a clumsy bellyflop. The reason is that its *linga-sharira* has not got the necessary know-how. But it gradually learns this through a process of trial and error, and in the course of time the boy's intention to dive neatly into the water will be effected exactly.

I have likened the *linga-sharira* to a mass of tape-recordings. The likeness is in one way literal in that, just as the tapes in a factory's automation send electromagnetic impulses which set the appropriate machines operating, so from the *linga-sharira*, electromagnetic impulses go to the appropriate muscles with precise " instructions " to do whatever is required to implement the will of *kama rupa.*

Kama rupa, *linga-sharira*, *prana*, correspond, in the physical man, to *Atma-Buddhi-Manas* in the spiritual man. Just as a man's spiritual will, his *Atma*, to do some such thing as write a play sets his *Manas* working, which, using all his know-how as a playwright, preserved in his *Buddhi*, achieves that play, so his *physical* will, exerted by his *kama rupa*, to bowl, for example, sets his *prana* working; this, using the know-how of his physical body, preserved in its *linga-sharira*, sends the necessary electromagnetic impulses to the appropriate muscles in his trunk, legs, arm, hand, and fingers to implement the intention.

All that remains is for his physical body, or *sthula-sharira* —the seventh and final indispensable principle of man—to transform those impulses into actual movements of the body.

So we see that all that makes a man consists of: *Atma, Buddhi, Manas, Kama rupa, Linga-sharira, prana, Sthula-sharira* —seven indispensable principles, all operative in his capacity as " business manager for the cosmic process of evolution."

CHAPTER X

OUR WORLD IN THE MAKING—I

At the beginning of this century the commonly accepted explanation of how the world came into being, and the one taught universally in schools, was the nebular theory of Laplace, propounded by him a century earlier. Sir Oliver Lodge wrote of it:

> The data on which it was founded are these:—Every motion in the solar system known at that time took place in one direction, and in one direction only:... Moreover, all these motions take place in or near a single plane.... Now all this could not be the result of chance.... It is as though they had once been parts of one great mass rotating as a whole; for if such a rotating mass broke up, its parts would retain its direction of rotation.... Laplace pictured to himself this mass shrinking and thereby whirling more and more rapidly.... The mass is held together by gravitation, every particle attracting every other particle; but since all the particles are describing curved paths, they will tend to fly off tangentially, and only a small excess of the gravitation force over the centrifugal is left to pull the particles in, and slowly to concentrate the nebula.... At length a point is reached where the two forces balance. A portion outside a certain line will be in equilibrium; it will be left behind, and the rest must contract without it. A ring is formed, and away goes the inner nucleus contracting further and further towards the centre. After a time another ring will be left behind in the same way, and so on. What happens to these rings?... They will break into large masses, which are ultimately very likely to collide and become one.

> The revolving body so formed is still a rotating gaseous mass; and it will go on shrinking and cooling and throwing off rings, like the larger nucleus by which it has been abandoned . . . The nucleus of the whole original mass we now see shrunk into what we call the sun. . . . The rings successively thrown off by it are now the planets . . . The rings thrown off by the planetary gaseous masses as they contracted have now become satellites.
>
> *Pioneers of Science*, (1893), pp. 267-70.

But the rates of rotation seen in our age in the sun and its planets have been the undoing of Laplace's nebular theory.

> The principle of 'conservation of angular momentum' requires that the rotation of the primeval sun shall persist in the rotation of the present sun and in the revolution of the planets around it. On adding together the contributions from all these, we obtain a total which ought to represent the angular momentum of the primeval sun. . . . When this total is calculated the startling fact emerges that the primeval sun cannot have had enough rotation to cause break-up at all. . . .indeed it can never have possessed more than a quite tiny fraction of the amount of rotation needed to break it up.
>
> Sir James Jeans: *The Universe Around Us*, (1929), p. 230.

Jeans propounded his own "Tidal Theory":

> When we find that a single star cannot of itself give birth to a solar system, it becomes natural to investigate what happens on the rare occasions on which the evolution of a star is directed along other paths by the near approach of a second star.
>
> TIDAL THEORY. Actual collisions must be so exceedingly rare that we can leave them out of account. When two stars pass close to one another without collision, the primary effect must be that each raises tides in the other. The closer the approach, the higher the tides in general, although something must depend also on the speed with which the bodies pass one another, because this determines the length of time during which they influence one another. . . . If the approach is very close indeed, the tides may assume an entirely

different aspect from the feeble tides which the sun and moon raise in our oceans; they may take the exaggerated forms of high mountains of matter moving over the surface of the star. An even closer approach may transform these mountains into long arms of gas drawn out from the body of the star. If, as will generally be the case, the two stars are of unequal weights, the lesser will in general suffer more disturbance than the weightier.

THE BIRTH OF THE PLANETS. **The long arm or filament of matter drawn out of a star by tidal action is at first continuous in structure, but analysis shows that it provides a fit subject for the operation of what we have called 'Gravitational Instability'. Condensations begin to form in this long arm of gas . . . . the smaller condensations are dissipated, while the larger increase in intensity until finally the filament breaks up into a number of detached masses—planets have been born.**

ibid., **pp. 232-3.**

But this theory has been severely criticized on the basis of this same matter of rotational momentum.

According to one hypothesis, the sun passed at some time very near another star, which drew out material from it, and this filament ultimately condensed into separate planets. The very close approach of two stars which were formerly far apart must, however, be a very rare event. Nevertheless the main objection to this hypothesis is its failure to account for the peculiar distribution of rotational, or angular, momentum in the solar system, which is mainly carried by the outer planets of far less mass than the sun.

Jones, Rotblat and Whitrow: ***Atoms and the Universe*****,**
(1956), p. 190.

Hoyle finds the theory untenable for other reasons. Looking at it in an imaginary scale model, in which the sun is represented by a ball 6 inches in diameter, that is about the size of a large grape fruit, he finds that our Earth would be a speck of dust 18 yards from it, and Pluto another speck of dust 710 yards off. He asks:

> **How could the material have been flung out so far? It was proved, for instance, by H. N. Russell, that, if Jeans' well-known tidal theory were right, the planets would have to move around the Sun at distances on our model of not more than a few *feet*.**
>
> **Hoyle: *The Nature of the Universe*, (1950), p. 72.**

Hoyle objected also that the material composing the Earth and the other planets is quite different from that of the Sun and that " the material torn from the Sun would not be at all suitable for the formation of the planets as we know them ". He continues:

> **Here then is a way to approach the problem of the origin of the planets. We must find a source of the strangely complicated rare material out of which the Earth and the planets were made. I will begin by telling you the answer in two sentences. There was once another star moving around the Sun that disintegrated with extreme violence. So great was the explosion that all the remnants were blown a long way from the Sun into space with the exception of a tiny wisp of gas, out of which the Earth and the planets were condensed.**
>
> ***ibid.*, p. 73.**

Although this sounds like an eye-witness's account of what happened, it is in fact no more than yet another theory, and one, it may be said, that has had few takers. First of all there is the question: What made that other star explode? Hoyle speculates:

> **It must have been appreciably more massive than the Sun. It must have been a very special star. It must have been a star that exploded with extreme violence. It must have been a supernova.**
>
> ***ibid.*, p. 74.**

This series of "must have been's" is, however, unconvincing. To give some sort of plausibility to this theory that our Earth is a fragment of a hypothetical star that exploded at a short distance—astronomically speaking—from our own star, the Sun, it (the theory) has been propped up by bringing in yet a *third* star. But even this has been found unacceptable.

> **Another hypothesis is based on the assumption that the sun was originally a member of a binary system. The other star, having suffered a direct collision with a third star, broke up, and the planets were formed from the resulting fragments. However, in view of the high temperatures that might be expected to arise, it is more probable that the material would just stream out into space than condense into planets. Jones, Rotblat and Whitrow:**
>
> ***op. cit.*, p. 190.**

Well, what *is* the view taken by scientists as to the genesis of the world? The unchallengeable answer is:

> **There is still no agreed theory on how the solar system originally came into being.**
>
> ***ibid*, p. 189.**

So the problem is still there. Rather, *problems*. It is natural for a thinker, curious to know how our Earth came into being, and looking round for a source from which the matter composing it could have been taken, to plump for the Sun, and then go on to speculate *how* it came to be extracted from it. But *can* we assume, as Laplace and Jeans did, that, as our Earth is part of the solar system, the history of the former is part of the history of the Sun? Or should we not rather regard heliogenesis and geogenesis as two quite separate problems?

In any case even if we do regard the Earth as having come from the Sun, we still have to find out from where the

Sun itself came. To say that it originated as part of our galaxy does not dispose of the problem; it merely shifts it a little further off. From where did the galaxy come? Somehow this problem has become more clamant as a result of the discovery that the universe is expanding, that the countless galaxies of which the radio telescope gives us cognisance are all moving at accelerating velocities away from each other. From this it has been inferred that " the Universe started its life a finite time ago in a single huge explosion ". Of this theory Hoyle writes:

> This big bang idea seemed to me to be unsatisfactory even before detailed examination showed that it leads to serious difficulties. For when we look at our own Galaxy there is not the smallest sign that such an explosion ever occurred.
>
> Hoyle: *op. cit.*, p. 94.

He then goes on to explode the explosion theory. Having done so, he puts in a word for the theory of " Continuous Creation ".

> Although I think there is no doubt that every galaxy we observe to be receding from us will, in about 10,000,000,000 years have passed entirely beyond the limit of vision of an observer in our galaxy, yet I think that such an observer would still be able to see the same number of galaxies as we do now. By this I mean that new galaxies will have condensed out of the background material at just about the rate necessary to compensate for those that are being lost as a consequence of their passing beyond our observable Universe. . . . For I find myself forced to assume that the nature of the Universe requires continuous creation—the perpetual bringing into being of new background material.
>
> ibid., pp. 96-7.

Notice, " bringing into being ": he does not regard the " background material " as being eternally at hand for condensation into new galaxies, but as being *continuously created.* This is just what Occult Science teaches—incidentally, it too will have nothing to do with the big bang idea.

Dr. Bronowski's "Amazing Biography of an Atom"—of carbon, taken as representative of physical matter—is, in effect, an account of cosmogenesis and combines the "big bang" with "continuous creation". According to him, the Universe was born as a "young star," in which hydrogen, helium, carbon and other heavier atoms evolved in the course of hundreds of millions of years. This then exploded—the big bang—scattering all these atoms into space. Later a "fresh star," our Sun, began to form—continuous creation—from "the thin sea of hydrogen which fills space" and in which were some of the atoms from the exploded star. Later still a "cosmic accident" pulled the earth out of the sun—Jeans' tidal theory. This is his account:

> **The birth began in a young star. A young star is a mass of hydrogen nuclei—that is, of protons—and because the star is hot the protons are moving about very fast. From time to time, one proton runs headlong into another and overcomes the electrical repulsion between them. When this happens, one of the protons loses its electrical charge and changes into a neutron, and the pair cling together as a single nucleus of a substance called deuterium, or heavy hydrogen. This nucleus will in time capture another proton and neutron: it then becomes a nucleus of helium. This is the fundamental process of fusion in the stars by which the primitive hydrogen of the universe is built up into a new basic material, helium. And it is the first stage in the birth of the heavier atoms.**
>
> **After several hundred million years, the star—now no longer young—is almost all helium. Now the helium atoms begin to run into one another. Every so often, not just two but three helium atoms crash together at the same moment. This is the second and critical stage of birth—the moment when the carbon nucleus is truly**

> **born. The atom of carbon whose biography we are considering was born by this extraordinary treble coincidence millions of years ago.**
>
> **How then did the carbon atom get to earth? The aging star went on building up carbon atoms and other heavier atoms from its helium. In time, crowded with heavy atoms, it exploded. The carbon and other atoms were scattered through space and became mixed with the thin sea of hydrogen which fills space.**
>
> **Later, when a fresh star began to form from this hydrogen, it caught up some of the carbon and other atoms with it. There are fresh stars being formed like this all the time: one of these fresh stars was the sun, formed three or four thousand million years ago.[1] Some time after that, a cosmic accident pulled the earth and the other planets out of the sun.**
>
> ***The Reader's Digest*, February 1964. (British ed.)**

Dr. Bronowski does not tell us how his "young star" had come into being. He describes it as a "mass of hydrogen nuclei moving about very fast". They were doing so because the mass was hot. But why was it hot? Presumably, because it was in a state of compression. The question is: How had that state of compression come about? George Gamow faces the question boldly:

> **We can ask ourselves two important questions: why was our universe in such a highly compressed state, and why did it start expanding? The simplest, and mathematically most consistent way of answering these questions would be to say that *the Big Squeeze***

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[1] Students of *The Secret Doctrine* will be familiar with the Brahmanical calculations of the lengths of the various Manvantaras and Yugas given in Vol. II, pp. 72-3. A Day of Brahma—that is, a Solar Manvantara, the life time of a solar system—is reckoned to be upwards of four thousand million years. Seeing that our solar system contains at least one man bearing globe, it is certainly not young. So this figure may be said to be in broad agreement with that worked out by the scientists.

As regards the age of our Earth, we read in *The Secret Doctrine*, I, 227: "But *we* have no knowledge at what time precisely the evolution and formation of our little Earth began. Therefore, it is impossible to calculate its age, unless the time of its birth is given—which the Teachers refuse to do, so far."

> ***which took place in the early history of our universe was the result of a collapse which took place at a still earlier era and that the present expansion is simply an "elastic" rebound which started as soon as the maximum permissible squeezing density was reached.***
>
> **Gamow: *The Creation of the Universe*, (1952), p. 29**

The question now is: What collapsed? What else but an earlier universe? He does not say that, but obviously implies it, and thereby concedes—unknowingly, maybe—the truth of the occult teaching that our universe is not the first in cosmic history, and that the force which now manifests in the formation of our universe had somehow remained when its predecessor ceased to be.

But occult and lay science are by no means in agreement as to the *nature* of that force. Gamow conceives of it as *elasticity* in a mass of highly compressed matter. Scientific writers, Gamow amongst others, envisage the possibility of our own sun and the other stars collapsing in due course and becoming what are known as "White Dwarfs," masses of highly compressed matter. But they have *no elasticity whatsoever.* He writes:

> **The so-called Companion of Sirius is a typical example of a White Dwarf. Its diameter is not much larger than that of the earth but its mass is about the same as that of the sun. White Dwarfs represent the extreme stage of stellar contraction and their mean density is about a million times that of water. Theoretical study of their internal structure indicates that they have lost the last trace of hydrogen and are still hot only because they have not yet had enough time to cool off and to become dark bodies. Their warmth is that of a corpse a few minutes after death. But because of their enormous heat content, it will take them billions of years to cool.**
>
> **In our galaxy there is approximately one White Dwarf to ten actively living stars of the Main Sequence, indicating that our**

universe is still comparatively young and its cemeteries are not yet overcrowded. Most probably all the White Dwarfs in our galaxy are the remains of rather massive stars which used up their hydrogen supply in a wasteful manner. The faint star in the centre of the Crab Nebula is in all probability one of the most recent cases of stellar mortality. Of course, it is not yet as dense as the Companion of Sirius, and is also still considerably hotter than that star, which must have been dead for several hundred million years. But it will reach that state eventually, and, as time goes on, there will be more and more stellar corpses in the vast expanses of the universe.

***Ibid.*, pp. 135-6.**

So that is what he foresees as the ultimate fate of our universe, space littered with stellar corpses, presumably as incapable of springing back into active life as any human corpse. Then why should the corpse of the universe preceding ours have sprung back into life?

The Big Squeeze, however, is purely conjectural, having been hypothesized to account for the Big Bang, which itself had been hypothesized to account for the Expanding Universe. But there is no need for this hypothesis of a cosmic explosion to explain cosmic expansion. Indeed the evidence we have shows that there never was such an explosion. The fact that the galaxies are moving at velocities which *go on accelerating* shows that the motive force is being generated by each galaxy *from within itself.* If we calculate back we find that they all started from rest: there was *initially* no force acting on them to push them outwards—or in any direction.

Occult science does not regard the expansion of our present universe as being in any way a " rebound " from the collapse of a predecessor. Indeed there was no such thing as a " collapse," a " falling together " of the matter which had composed it. On the contrary, at the end of the

Mahāmanvantara, it *disintegrated*, all its matter returning to its pristine state of Ākāsha, lay science's "intergalactic matter".

We tend to believe that, as the evolution of a globe or a solar system is such a gradual, age-long process, its dissolution will be equally long-drawn out. Why should it be? After all, the gestation and development of a man, the microcosm, is a long and tedious process. But his end is sudden. The same is true of the macrocosm.

His mistake is that he believes a long time must be devoted to the ruin of the solar system: we are told that it occurs in the twinkling of an eye but not without many preliminary warnings.

***ML*. 97.**

There is a moment in the existence of every molecule and atom of matter when, for one cause or another, the last spark of spirit or motion or life (call it by whatever name) is withdrawn, and in the same instant, with the swiftness which surpasses that of the lightning glance of thought, the atom or molecule or an aggregation of molecules is annihilated to return to its pristine purity of intracosmic matter.

***ML*. 139.**

There is a fundamental and vital difference between occult science's concept of intracosmic matter and lay science's concept of intergalactic matter. The latter is regarded as being entirely passive, whereas the former is described as being both passive *and active*.

We recognize but *one* element in Nature (whether spiritual or physical) outside which there can be no Nature since it is *Nature* itself, and which as the *Akasa* pervades our solar system, every atom being part of itself, pervades throughout *space* and is space in fact, which pulsates as in profound sleep during the pralayas, and is the universal Proteus, the ever active Nature during the Manvantaras.

***ML*. 63.**

Scientists too see something of this kind to be, not merely a possibility, but a necessity, if the law of conservation of energy is to be regarded as having as much validity as that of the conservation of mass. If all the matter we find in the universe could not have been created from nothing, then neither could all the energy manifesting in it—unless we are prepared to hold that it was all created by a miracle-working deity of some kind. So Ākāsha or intergalactic matter *must* have energy of some kind present in it.

Occult science declares that it has and calls it "Svabhāvat" or "Fohat".[1] How has it come to be in Ākāsha? Well, it is a fundamental teaching of occult science that no man or globe or solar system or universe is an entirely *new* being. Every one of them is a rebirth of an earlier being which, although it ceased to be *objectively* still continued on *subjectively*, as Svabhāvat, in which the design of the old being was imprinted in all its details, even the minutest, to serve as a design for the new being. Like a tape-recording. This is not just an *analogy:* Svabhāvat and a tape-recording are basically the same thing—electromagnetism.

An understanding of this makes it easy for us to accept the occult teaching that the Mahāpralayas, the intervals between the Mahāmanvantaras, are as long in duration as the Mahāmanvantaras themselves—311 million million years, according to Brahmanical calculation. This is in contrast to the belief held by those scientists who have come to accept the idea of there having been a universe prior to our own, but regard the present one as having been created by a *rebound* from the collapse of its predecessor, the rebound being immediate—astronomically speaking.

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[1] "Svabhâvat" is a Sanskrit word meaning "self-existing". "Fohat" is a Turanian word of uncertain origin, but looks to be a corruption of "Svabhâvat," the initial, unstressed syllable having been elided. The Master K. H. makes a distinction between the two: "S in its universal application, Fohat when manifesting throughout our phenomenal world" (*ML.* 89). It is as if a tape-recording, besides being known by that term generally, that is, regardless of whether it was in storage or being played, were called by another name in the latter case only, when actively producing sound. This nicety of distinction is not always observed in *The Secret Doctrine*. But H. P. B. writes: "Fohat is one thing in the yet Unmanifested Universe, and another in the phenomenal and Cosmic World". (*S.D.* I, 134).

The question naturally arises: Are all the universes of the past, present and future no more than exactly the same recording played over and over and over again? Now the likening of Svabhāvat to a recording is helpful, but can be misleading. It is true that CONTINUITY is the rule of Nature. But so also is EVOLUTION—of the macrocosm as of the microcosm. Every manifestation—of a universe or solar system or globe, as of a man—results in a betterment.

> **Motion is the eternal order of things and affinity or attraction its handmaid of all works. The thrill of life will again re-unite the atoms, and it will stir again in the inert planet when the time comes. Though all its forces have remained in *statu quo* and are now asleep, yet little by little it will—when the hour *re*-strikes—gather for a new cycle of man-bearing maternity, and give birth to something still higher as moral and physical types than during the preceding *manvantara.*** ***ML.* 67.**

The Master M. is speaking here of a *global* manvantara. But the same betterment is found in a solar system as compared with its predecessor in the preceding *solar* manvantara.

> **After each solar pralaya there is a *complete* destruction of our system and after each solar p. begins the absolute objective reformation of our system and each time everything is more perfect than before.** ***ML.* 92.**

On the principle, "as below, so above," it seems fiar to assume that every new *universe* would be found to be an improvement on its predecessor if it were possible to compare them.

CHAPTER XI

OUR WORLD IN THE MAKING—II

Now let us see how a new universe comes into being. Throughout the Mahāpralaya there has been nothing in space but Ākāsha, cosmic atoms without any relationship between them, but kept pulsating independently of each other by Svabhāvat. Then, somewhere in space, a single cosmic atom differentiates. This is the first flutter of a new life, the very first movement in a new Mahāmanvantara.

> **Throughout the first two Parts, it has been shown that, at the first flutter of renascent life, Svabhāvat, '*the Mutable Radiance of the Immutable Darkness unconscious in Eternity*,' passes, at every new rebirth of Kosmos, from an inactive state into one of intense activity: that it differentiates, and then begins its work through differentiation. This is work is KARMA....**
>
> ***The one Cosmic Atom becomes seven Atoms on the plane of Matter, and each is transformed into a centre of energy; that same Atom becomes seven Rays on the plane of spirit; and the seven creative Forces of Nature, radiating from the Root-Essence.... follow, one the right, the other the left path, separate till the end of the Kalpa, and yet in close embrace. What unites them? Karma.***
>
> **The Atoms emanated from the Central Point emanate in their turn new centres of energy, which, under the potential breath of Fohat, begin their work from within without, and multiply other minor centres. These, in the course of evolution and involution, form in their turn the roots or developing causes of new effects, from**

worlds and 'man-bearing' globes, down to genera, species, and classes of all the *seven* kingdoms, of which we know only *four*.

SD. I, 695-6.

These four are the mineral, vegetable, animal and human kingdoms. They are preceded by three elemental kingdoms, of which nothing was known to Science when *The Secret Doctrine* was written, but of which scientists have got some inkling since then. A description of "the first flutter of the manvantaric life breath" is also given by the Master K. H.

You must take each entity at its starting point in the manvantaric course as the primordial cosmic atom already differentiated by the first flutter of the manvantaric life breath. . . . Drawn by its '*chemical* affinity'(?) to coalesce with other like atoms, the aggregate sum of such united atoms will in time become a man-bearing globe after the stages of the cloud, the spiral and sphere of fire-mist and of the condensation, consolidation, shrinkage and cooling of the planet have been successively passed through. . . . The great difficulty in grasping the idea in the above process lies in the liability to form more or less incomplete mental conceptions of the working of the *one* element, of its inevitable presence in every imponderable atom, and its subsequent ceaseless and almost illimitable multiplication of new centres of activity without affecting in the least its own original quantity. Let us take such an aggregation of atoms destined to form our globe and then follow, throwing a cursory look at the whole, the special work of such atoms. We will call the primordial atom A. This being not a circumscribed centre of activity, but the initial point of a manvantaric whirl of evolution, gives birth to new centres which we may term B, C, D, etc., incomputably. Each of these capital points gives birth to minor centres, a, b, c, etc. And the latter in the course of evolution and involution in time develop into A's, B's, C's, etc., and so form the roots or are the developing causes of new genera, species, classes, etc., ad infinitum. Now neither the primordial A and its companion atoms, nor their

derived a's, b's, c's, have lost one tittle of their original force or life-essence by the evolution of their derivatives. The force there is not transformed into something else, but, with each development of a new centre of activity from *within* itself, multiplies ad infinitum without ever losing a particle of its nature in quantity or quality.

_ML_. 87-8.

That the Master is describing the first flutter of life of a *globe*, and H. P. Blavatsky, that of a *Kosmos*, makes no essential difference. If two people were to describe, one, the first flutter of life of a *tree*, the other, that of a *forest*, their descriptions would be found to be identical: a forest begins as a single plant.

The two passages quoted call for—and repay—deep study. The " cosmic atom " mentioned in both of them and the " seven Atoms on the plane of Matter " mentioned in the first are not " atoms " of the chemical elements. Of the first, Science knows nothing; but " Atoms on the plane of Matter " are, no doubt, the same thing as Science's " subatomic particles ". Some writers avoid the glaring bull in the term " subatomic particles "—divisions of the indivisible—by using instead the term, " elementary particles ". But that shifts the meaning of " element " from what have so far been regarded as " elements "—hydrogen, oxygen, etc.—to the particles which make up their atoms (in point of fact the term "element" can accurately be applied only to the *one* element, Ākāsha). Would it not be better to transfer the term " atom " to where it fairly belongs, these particles, which are truly indivisible? Another term would then be necessary to take its place in its present meaning. We could speak of " *units* of hydrogen " and " *units* of oxygen ". But perhaps it would be best to invent an entirely new term, say " penatom," meaning " *almost* at the point of indivisibility". A mixture of Latin and Greek? So it is. But so also is "subatomic".

It is hard to form a concept of this "differentiation". But the Master forewarned us of "the liability to form more or less incomplete mental conceptions of the working of the *one* element, of its inevitable presence in every imponderable atom, and its subsequent ceaseless and almost illimitable multiplication of new centres of activity without affecting in the least its own original quantity". It would be well to note that the antecedent of "its," occurring three times in this excerpt, is not "element," but "working"—this "differentiation". We must guard against thinking of the cosmic atom (which is truly indivisible) as *splitting up* into seven atoms. The paragraph in italics is obviously a quotation, as may be judged from the elision, represented by a succession of dots—H. P. Blavatsky commonly uses italics when quoting a High Occult Authority. What seems to be meant is that the one *kind* of cosmic atom becomes seven *kinds* of atoms on the plane of matter, because that is what the Master actually says:

> **At the beginning of the solar manvantara the hitherto subjective elements of the material world now scattered in cosmic dust—receiving their impulse from the new Dhyān Chohans of the new solar system (the highest of the old ones having gone higher)—will form into primordial ripples of life, and separating into differentiating centres of activity, combine in a graduated scale of seven stages of evolution.**
>
> ***ML*. 96.**

The picture one forms in one's mind is that of cosmic atoms, hitherto homogeneous, differentiating by vibrating—"rippling"—at different rates.

In any case, whatever "differentiation" consists of, it has the effect of transforming homogeneous "cosmic atoms"

(Mūlaprakriti, Science's "intergalactic matter") into "atoms on the plane of matter" (Prakriti, Hoyle's "background material"). We find—and this makes confusion worse confounded for us in our efforts to understand differentiation—that a little earlier in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 681) there is mention of Mūlaprakriti differentiating into the *three* principles "which the various elements start into existence from". However, there is no inconsistency, because earlier still in that work it is written:

> **Fohat becomes the propelling force, the active Power which causes the One to become Two and Three—on the cosmic plane of manifestation. The triple One differentiates into the Many, and then Fohat is transformed into that force which brings together the elemental atoms, and makes them aggregate and combine.**
>
> ***SD*. I, 135.**

Science too speaks of *more than three* "subatomic particles" —the number goes on increasing as new discoveries are made —and yet of only *three* as being the constituents of the chemical elements. However, all this is very much in a state of flux —and, let it not be forgotten, *development*—not only for the student of lay science, but also for that of occult science. For the latter the trouble is that the Occultists' teachings on matters of the highest import are commonly "scrambled" for the uninitiated. The Master K. H. wrote to A. P. Sinnett:

> **Neither you nor any other man across the threshold has had or ever will have the 'complete theory' of Evolution taught him; or get it unless he guesses it for himself. If anyone can unravel it from such tangled threads as are given him, very well; and a fine proof it would be of his or her spiritual insight.**
>
> ***ML*. 342.**

> **My friend, try to understand that you are putting me questions pertaining to the highest initiations. That I can give you a *general* view, but that I dare not, nor will I, enter upon details.**
>
> ***ML*. 174.**

Must we then resignedly treat truths withheld from us beyond the threshold as being forever mysteries to us? Not necessarily, because

> **On close observation, you will find that it was never the intention of the Occultists really to conceal what they had been writing from the earnest determined students, but rather to lock up their information for safety-sake, in a secure safe-box, the key to which is—intuition.**
>
> ***ML* 275.**

All truth, even the deepest, is within the cognizance of the Universal Buddhi, "which is the synthetic aggregation of all the Dhyān Chohans, as of all other intelligences, whether great or small, that ever were, are or will be" (*ML*. 338), and the key to it is one's own Buddhi, one's intuition, slowly forged by diligence and zeal. There is nothing to prevent one from forging that key, without which one can never hope to see—with a "seeing eye"—a full and clear picture of Evolution, however well it may have been painted. In any case, it is better to have an incomplete picture than no picture at all or, worse still, a false picture.

However, even if we do not understand what exactly happens when a cosmic atom differentiates, we can at least understand what *makes* it differentiate. This we are told in the following passage:

> **From the Unknown One, the Infinite Totality, the Manifested One, or the periodical, Manvantaric Deity, emanates, and this is. . . . the Four-faced Brahma of the Hindu religion.**
>
> ***SD*. I, 135.**

Now what is Brahma? In the words of the Master M., "Brahma, from the root 'brih,' the Sanskrit for 'to expand, grow or to fructify,' Brahma being but the vivifying *expansive* force of nature in its eternal evolution" (*ML*. 71). We have no need to put our *imagination* to work to form a concept of this force. We can see it quite plainly in action throughout all nature. In man we see it as that primal expansionism that drives every individual or grouping of individuals—family, class, sect, race, organization, etc.—to go on striving to become ever greater by enlarging his/ her/ their/ power/ possessions/ knowledge/ abilities. We see it quite plainly at work in all animals and plants in the spontaneous growth and development of the individual and species; we see it in bacteria, which go on multiplying by fission; and, by means of the electron microscope, we see it even in those infinitesimal organisms, the viruses, which go on multiplying in their own unique way.

Brahma, spontaneous expansionism, is found at work also in "inorganic" matter. One manifestation of it is chemical affinity, as seen, for example, in a piece of rusting iron. When an atom of iron and an atom of oxygen leave their fellows to coalesce as a molecule of iron oxide, it is their own spontaneous expansionism that makes them do so. Even in "sub-atomic particles" is spontaneous expansionism found to be at work. When two protons fuse together (one having become electrically neutral in order to do so) to become a deuterium nucleus, it is not as a result of an *accidental* collision, but because they have *spontaneously* coalesced. But the first manifestation of Brahma in the Mahāmanvantara is that first cosmic atom differentiating, thus setting up the first "centre of activity" in the Universe.

Let us pause a moment to look at that expression, "centre of activity," used by the Master. We tend to regard a crystal or a speck of rust as a *thing*, the static result of chemical action of some kind that took place at some time earlier. But each is a centre of activity, that is, of activity that is *going on continuously*. Each is truly an " organism ". Occult science maintains that in the phenomenal world there is nothing that is inorganic, not even atoms. (See *SD*. I, 490).

Modern science, too, has come round to the same view, and present-day scientists use the terms, " living " and " non-living," where an earlier generation would have used " organic " and " inorganic ". They recognize that atoms are organisms, " centres of activity "—" organism " is derived from the Greek verb, ἔργω, meaning " to work ".

Even the terms, " living " and " non-living," would not be regarded by occult science as acceptable substitutes, as it supports the teaching of the ancient philosophers that every atom is living: it has a monad, an " anima,"[1] which is its energy, its ἐνέργεια, the something that is within its " working " and maintains that working. In their book, *Order and Chaos in the World of Atoms* (1942), Saunders and Clark, exploring the mystery of chemical affinity, look at—and discard—earlier theories that atoms have hooks or spikes which occasionally get them joined to one another; then glance at " the fantastic idea " that atoms have " monads "—they hold the word at arms length between inverted commas—and, with a chuckle, toss it away; they then go on to show that the mysterious force is, in fact, electricity. Without knowing it, they thereby prove the truth of " the fantastic idea " held by Theosophists (mentioned by name earlier in the book). Occult science teaches that a monad—of an atom, a stone, a plant, an animal, a man

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[1] " All these philosophers believed more or less in *animated* Atoms, not in invisible specks of so-called ' brute ' matter." *S.D.* I, 620.

It is for this same reason that occult science finds the terms, " zoic " and " azoic," used by geologists, to be unacceptable. See *S.D.* I. 278.

—is *electricity:* it is electrical activity that keeps it in being as an atom, a stone, or whatever.

Well, what terms can we use as replacements for "organic" and "inorganic"? What about "biotic" and "abiotic"? The Greek word, *βίος*, means, not "life," but "*a* life" (it is correctly used in "biography," but not in "biology") and, as plants and animals (including man) can *be seen* to come into being, live their span of life, and then die, this would serve as a distinguishing feature between them on the one hand and, on the other, the rest of the phenomenal world.

Now we come to a most important truth about Brahma: THE SPONTANEOUS EXPANSIONISM *OF* SPONTANEOUS EXPANSIONISM. When centre A, in its expansionism, takes up a *new* activity, it spreads to other centres *ad infinitum.* Read again the passage from *ML.* 87-8 quoted earlier. Note particularly that the development of the new activity in each *new* centre is spontaneous: centre A does not *make* centres B, C, D, etc., follow suit; the activity in each new centre develops *from within.*

This is true of all kingdoms of nature. It is well known that, once a speck of rust forms on a piece of iron, the rusting soon spreads to the rest of it. The following passage might almost have been written to illustrate spontaneous expansionism of spontaneous expansionism in the birth and growth of crystals.

> **Molecules resemble human beings in that they cannot start to do something new—in this case, to crystallize—until a few of their number have set the fashion. This 'setting the fashion' or, as we say, producing the first crystal nucleus, is a most interesting study in itself. Further problems arise when we consider how it is that the crystal nucleus is able to reproduce itself indefinitely, just as if it were alive. Saunders and Clark: *op. cit.*, pp. 155-6.**

But it *is* alive—that is precisely the point that occult science goes on trying to drive home. So also is our rusting piece of iron. Both " resemble human beings ". In human beings this spread of every new expansionist activity is known as " keeping up with the Joneses ".

Spontaneous expansionism of spontaneous expansionism is found to be operative in elementary particles too. In fact, it is in them that it first manifests: that first cosmic atom differentiating—and leading cosmic atoms B, C, D, etc., ad infinitum to follow suit—may truly be said to be the very first, the absolutely original, Joneses of the whole vast Universe.

The building up of the Universe proceeds always as a cosmic fugue, every new theme being opened by a single centre of activity, and then spreading to others *ad infinitum.*

There is another very important truth about Brahma which the Master twice enlarges on in the passage from *ML.* 87-8 quoted earlier—I did say that it repays deep study: read it yet again. This truth may be enunciated thus: although expansionism goes on expanding without limit, the *force* of expansion always remains the same. No matter how far it may spread, be it to millions of millions of centres of activity, it is just as strong in each of the latest as it was in the single original centre. Example: the Joneses having installed with great gusto in their living room an up-to-the-minute television set, incorporating color and stereophonic sound, the Smiths and the Browns follow suit, and then the Schmidts and the Brauns, the Lefevres and the Lebruns, etc., etc., into millions, each of them doing so with *as much gusto* as the Joneses did originally.

The significance of this truth is probably more striking when looked at from the other side: Each of the latest millions of centres exerts no greater force in setting up a particular activity within itself than did the original centre. In a footnote which the Master K. H. added to Éliphas Lévi's *The Paradoxes of the Highest Science* an interesting geometrical parallel is provided. Using coins of precisely the same size, six of them can be placed in a circle round one, so that each coin touches its neighbours; then 12 in a circle round those; then 18, 24, 30, 36, and so on, the number being increased each time by six—no more, no less. Even when the circle of coins has become big enough to cover the whole Gobi desert, the next belt of coins will still be exactly six more than its predecessor. The Master adds: " On this principle the Universe, both in its concrete and abstract manifestations, is built up ".

When we view the Universe in all its breath-taking immensity, we wonder what the immense force was that produced it. But that is the same as if a person, flying for the first time over the Amazon basin and viewing limitless forest, extending beyond the horizon in all directions, were to wonder how all those millions and millions of trees had suddenly sprung up there. Of course, they had done nothing of the kind. At no time was there anything in the nature of a big bang of trees. The growth had been by adding plant cells, like the belts of coins in the parable, no greater force being used to produce each of the countless new cells than was necessary to produce the first new cell in the germination of the single seed from which the first tree grew.

That brings us back to the seed of our Universe, cosmic atom A. Its differentiating, as we have seen, sets other cosmic atoms doing likewise, thus producing " atoms on the plane of Matter ": presumably Science's protons, electrons, neutrons positrons, etc. According to the theory of Continuous Creation—and in this, occult science is in agreement with lay science—transformation (or "creation," if you prefer) of this kind is all the time going on somewhere in space, but "the calculated rate of creation is so small as to be far below any possibility of direct observation" (Jones, Rotblat and Whitrow: *Atoms and the Universe*, p. 237). It would appear that the spread of differentiation goes on for millions of years before there is sufficient "background material" to form, not a universe, nor a galaxy, nor even a solar system, but a single globe. And it is to the evolution of a *globe* that we shall be confining our attention for the rest of this chapter.

Then, it would appear, somewhere in all this mass of "background material" a single proton and electron begin *spontaneously* to waltz together as an atom of hydrogen, a *new* activity which is taken up, also spontaneously, by other protons and electrons, thus producing more and more hydrogen. Occasionally a pair is joined by a neutron to form an atom of heavy hydrogen. Yet another new activity is initiated when two atoms of heavy hydrogen coalesce to form an atom of helium, an activity which also spreads, producing more and more helium. Atomic fusion is then carried further to produce still more complex elements.

This account is somewhat similar to Dr. Bronowski's. But there is a vital difference. As, in common with other scientists, he conceives of intergalactic matter as being *purely passive*, he finds it hard to understand how the protons had come to fuse—after all, they never do so normally in space. So he has conceived of them as moving about very fast and, so, running headlong into one another *accidentally* and clinging together to become the nuclei of heavy hydrogen; and, later on, of atoms of helium colliding together *in threes*, by "an extra-ordinary treble coincidence," and coalescing as carbon atoms.

Occult science, on the other hand, which declares Ākāsha to be both passive *and active*, finds no need to hypothesize all this. It teaches that the various activities that start up in the evolution of a globe—differentiation of cosmic atoms into elemental atoms; aggregation of elemental atoms to form penatoms of hydrogen; nuclear fusion to form the more compound chemical elements; chemical affinity to form compound molecules—are all *spontaneous*, requiring only a leader to set the example, exactly as in the formation of crystals or of rust.

But there is a problem here all the same, to account for the activity starting in the *first* centre. Looking at our rusting iron, we know that it would probably have gone quite some time with oxygen (in the air and in water) playing on it without any rust forming. Then a speck of rust forms. Why? If it be said that it is because of the action of oxygen on the iron, then why did it not form earlier? Why at that particular point of time?

The only explanation that can be offered is that a molecule of iron oxide had been carried from somewhere else by wind or water and, having settled on the iron, had initiated the process of rusting there. The theory is on all fours with that propounded by biologists who, puzzled to understand how the first biotic cell came to be on our globe, hypothesize that it had been carried here from some other globe—by a meteorite or some such thing. This idea has an occult teaching to support it, that of Transmigration of Life Atoms.

> **Occultism teaches that—(*a*) the life-atoms of our (Prāna) Life-Principle are never entirely lost when a man dies. That the atoms best impregnated with the Life-Principle, an independent, eternal, conscious factor, are partially transmitted from father to son by heredity, and are partially drawn once more together and be-**

> **come the animating principle of the new body in every new incarnation, of the Monads. Because (*b*), as the Individual Soul is ever the same, so are the atoms of the lower principles (the body, its astral, or life-double, etc.), drawn as they are by affinity and Karmic law always to the same individuality in a series of various bodies.**
>
> ***SD.* II, 709.**

The teaching as given here refers to the transmigration of *human* life atoms from the " old being " to the " new being ". A person's physical body develops from a germinal cell derived from his father and mother. At the same time it develops from germinal atoms—also known as " permanent atoms "—derived from his " old being," which is his " sole parent—father and mother at once " (*ML.* 108). Not only his physical body, but all his lower principles develop from atoms derived from his " old being," whom he resembles far more closely than any other being.

Now the doctrine of Transmigration of Life Atoms does not apply to man alone, the microcosm: it applies equally to the macrocosm.

> **All is one Law. Man has his seven principles, the germs of which he brings with him at his birth. So has a planet or a world . . . The world No. A is born; and with it, clinging like barnacles to the bottom of a ship in motion, evolute from its first breath of life the living beings of its atmosphere, from the germs hitherto inert, now awakening to life with the first motion of the sphere.**
>
> **The Master M. in *ML.* 73.**

The implications of this doctrine are so immense that the mind reels in doing no more than trying to take stock of it all, without going any further to consider *how* all this operates. Slowly one gathers that the evolution of our globe at *any* stage or in *any* particular is not something unique in cosmic history, unrelated to other global evolutions of the past or present in the Universe, any more than the development of a child before and after birth is unique and unrelated to other such developments. Indeed scientists do not doubt for a moment, with regard to the latter, that somehow—but *how?* that is the great question—the germs of *everything* that develops later in the child were present in the germinal cell from the beginning.

There have been writers who, having started with the assumption that the various biological species found on our globe had developed as a result of *chance* events in the life of mother Earth, have gone on to speculate what those events were: what chance event, for example, forced a particular species to take to moving about on its hind legs, thus leaving the forefeet free to develop into hands. It is as if someone were to speculate what chance event in the life of a human mother had brought about the development in her child of say, a bone framework or a digestive system.

So we see that the seed of our world contained in it the germs of every "activity" that was to develop in it. But there is a nagging question here: What carried that seed at a particular moment in time to the particular region of space where our world was to develop? The Master K. H. tells us that it was the Dhyān Chohans (see the quotation from *ML.* 96 given earlier), who guide evolution right up to man. In reference to the impulse which leads the human ego into rebirth from Devachan He writes:

> **Everything is so harmoniously adjusted in nature—especially in the subjective world, that no mistake can be ever committed by the Tathāgathas—or Dhyan Chohans—who guide the impulses.**
>
> ***ML.* 100.**

This does not mean that the Dhyān Chohans *create* a new world or a new man—making up out of Their heads how each is to develop, its future history—any more than a gardener *creates* a new tree when he plants a seed. The force or "impulse" that goes to the making of each—as also its future history—was present in its "seed," and, just as the experienced gardener plants the seed at a time and in a place most congenial to its germination and growth, so the Dhyān Chohans guide the germinal impulses of the world-to-be or man-to-be to the place and at the time most congenial.

Let there be no misconception as to the meaning of the word, "Karma," used twice in the passage from *SD.* I, 695-6, quoted earlier. There is no question of the Dhyān Chohans doing any balancing of accounts to decide what the joys and sorrows of the world-to-be or man-to-be are to be, any more than the gardener works out what measure of sunshine and rain, heat and cold, the tree-to-be has *merited.* The Karma is the "doing" of each of them—that is what the word means—the course of doing which each will follow, because the development of a globe follows as regular a course as does that of a child from the moment of conception, the course in each case being laid down by Karma.

> **Law in Nature is uniform, and the conception, formation, birth, progress and development of the child differs from those of the globe only in magnitude.**
>
> ***ML.* 91.**

The development of a man-bearing globe passes through seven stages or kingdoms.

> **There are seven kingdoms. The first group comprises three degrees of elementals, or nascent centres of forces—from the first stage of differentiation of Mulaprakriti to its third degree; . . . the**

second or higher group embraces the kingdoms from vegetable to man; the mineral kingdom thus forming the central or turning point in the degrees of the "Monadic Essence," considered as an evolving energy.

***SD*. I, 199.**

The Occultists have given no details about the elemental kingdoms, but, assuming that what science has to tell us about the development of our globe (as in Dr. Bronowski's account, quoted earlier) is in its essence true, and correlating this with occult teaching, the picture which forms in one's mind of the first four kingdoms is, in outline, as follows:—

First Elemental Kingdom. Starting with Ākāsha as Mūlaprakriti, Science's "intergalactic matter," the first stage consists of its *differentiation* into "elemental atoms," Science's "subatomic particles".

Second Elemental Kingdom. At this stage elemental atoms *coalesce* to form *atoms*, at first the simplest atoms, those of hydrogen and heavy hydrogen, and then, by *fusion* of these, the more complex atoms.

Third Elemental Kingdom. Now *chemical affinity* operates to form compound *molecules*—of air and water vapour, among other compounds.

Mineral Kingdom. At this stage *cohesion* of atoms or/and molecules operates to form matter as we know it, and the "condensation, consolidation, shrinkage and cooling of the planet" bring into being a globe having on its surface the materials and conditions essential to biotic life, which now starts, ushering in the next stage, the vegetable kingdom.

The seven stages are said to be about equal in duration. A striking fact that stands out conspicuously from all this is that it takes longer to evolve from Ākāsha the materials and conditions in which biotic organisms can exist than to evolve humanity from those first biotic organisms. This is because of the constantly *accelerating* pace of development found in evolution of all kinds. For example, modern industrialization, which may be said to have had its inception in Britain in the latter part of the Eighteenth century, developed quite slowly during the first hundred years of its history as compared with its expansion since then.

This in no way conflicts with what has been said earlier: that the force bringing about successive expansions remains always the same. It is of a piece with the fact, known to every schoolboy, that a stone, falling freely from rest, falls 16 feet during the first second; 48 feet during the next second; and 80 feet during the third; and so on—and yet the force of gravity acting on it to make it fall remains the same.

In a later chapter, entitled " Man in the Making ", I hope to show that the rate of advance goes on accelerating as evolution progresses through the vegetable, animal and human kingdoms.

CHAPTER XII

MAN IN THE MAKING

THE day is past when it could be confidently believed that man was a special work of an Almighty Creator, something apart from the rest of creation. Sir Julian Huxley, in his excellent little book, *Evolution in Action*, (Penguin, 1963), presents the modern, more intelligent view:

> The present is the first period in which we have been able to grasp that the universe is a process in time and to get a first glimpse of our true relation with it. We can see ourselves as history and can see that history in its proper relation with the history of the universe as a whole.
>
> All phenomena have a historical aspect. From the condensation of nebulae to the development of the infant in the womb, from the formation of the earth as a planet to the making of a political decision, they are all processes in time; and they are all interrelated as partial processes within the single universal process of reality. All reality, in fact, *is* evolution, in the perfectly proper sense that it is a one-way process in time; unitary; continuous; irreversible; self-transforming; and generating variety and novelty during its transformation....
>
> The overall process of evolution in this comprehensive sense comprises three main phases. Although there is continuity between them, they are very distinct in their main features, and represent three sectors of reality, in which the general process of evolution operates in three quite different ways. We may call these three phases the inorganic or, if you like, cosmological; the organic or biological; and the human or psycho-social. The three sectors of

the universal process differ radically in their extent, both in space and time, in the methods and mechanisms by which their self-transformations operate, in their rates of change, in the results which they produce, and in the levels of organization which they attain. They also differ in their time-relations. The second phase is only possible on the basis of the first, the third on the basis of the second; so that, although all three are in operation today, their origins succeeded each other in time. There was a critical point to be surmounted before the second could arise out of the first, or the third out of the second.

pp. 11-12.

Occult Science sees *seven* stages in the evolutionary process:- 1-3, three elemental kingdoms; 4, the mineral kingdom; 5, the vegetable kingdom; 6, the animal kingdom; 7, the human kingdom. But this must not be regarded as being in conflict with Huxley's phasing of the evolutionary process. In using the expression, "three *main* phases", he concedes that there would be more than three if particularized further. In point of fact, his first phase comprises the first *four* of occult science's kingdoms; and in his second phase the 5th and 6th of these kingdoms are telescoped. His third phase is the same as the 7th kingdom.

Admittedly, his three phases do differ radically in the ways he has mentioned. Further on he outlines their distinguishing features.

Phase 1. **The mechanism of its transformation is of the simplest kind—physical, and very occasionally chemical, interaction. The degree of organization to be found in it is correspondingly simple: most of this vast sector consists of nothing but radiations, subatomic particles, and atoms; only here and there in it is matter able to attain the molecular level, and nowhere are its molecules at all large or complicated. Very few of them contain more than**

half a dozen atoms, as opposed to the many thousands of atoms in the more complex organic molecules found in living substance.

pp. 13-14.

Phase 2. The level of organization reached is almost infinitely greater than in the preceding sector. The proteins, the most essential chemical constituents of living substance, have molecules with tens or even hundreds of thousands of atoms, all arranged in patterns characteristic for each kind of protein. Each single tiny cell has a highly complex organization of its own, with a nucleus, chromosomes, and genes, and other cell-organs....

Evolutionary transformation in this sector is brought about by the wholly new method of natural selection, which was not available during the thousands of millions of years before the emergence of living substance. This new method is responsible for the much higher level of organization which evolution here produces, as well as the greater variety of organization. It is also responsible for the much faster tempo of change.[1]

pp. 15-16.

Phase 3. Once again, a new method of transformation has become available in this sector—the method of cumulative experience combined with conscious purpose. This has produced a new kind of result, in the shape of transmissible cultures; the main unit of evolution in the human phase is not the biological species, but the stream of culture, and genetic advance has taken a back seat as compared with changes in the transmissible techniques of cultural advance—

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[1] This is a most important truth, which should not be overlooked. Natural selection is possible only because individual plants and animals have a *limited life-span*, at the end of which they must perforce die. Their being mortal is the price they pay for the progress of the *species*; although the fit, no less than the unfit, have to die in due course the tendency is for only the former to produce the next generation, which as a result, tends to be an improvement on the preceding one, taken as a whole.

Occult science, however, would demur at the use of the word, "living", as used here by Huxley, because it maintains that *all* substance is living, what he obviously implies is "living, but destined to die", mortal. It would be better to use the word, "biotic", meaning "living a limited span of life", to distinguish plants and animals (including man) from minerals, which are "abiotic".

arts and skills, moral codes and religious beliefs, and above all knowledge and ideas.... In a way most important, purpose has now entered the process of transformation itself; *both the mechanisms* of psycho-social evolution and its products have a truly purposeful component, and evolution in this sector is pulled on consciously from in front as well as being impelled from behind.

pp. 17-18.

The question is: Is it better on the whole to examine the course of evolution as a *seven*-stage process or as a *three*-phase one? The latter certainly has the merit of simplicity, but, in lumping together Occult Science's first four stages into a single phase, we tend to overlook the immense transformation that takes place during what is treated as only one phase: it starts with Akasha as Mulaprakriti, the intergalactic matter that eternally fills space, and it culminates in a solid globe, containing all the materials and conditions necessary to the existence of biotic organisms, a transformation which, both occult and lay science are agreed, takes longer than the evolution of biotic organisms into their most advanced form, the human. Surely it would be more useful to follow that transformation step by step, say: (1) the transformation of intergalactic matter into what Hoyle has termed " background material ", that is, in the language of Occult Science, the *differentiation* of homogeneous Mulaprakriti into heterogeneous Prakriti; (2) the coalescing of the " subatomic particles " (which constitute Prakriti) to form chemical atoms; first the simplest atoms, those of hydrogen and heavy hydrogen; then, by atomic fusion, the more complex atoms; (3) The formation of molecules by *chemical affinity*; (4) the *cohesion* of atoms or/and molecules to form matter as we perceive it with our unaided senses, and then the formation of a solid globe by condensation, consolidation, shrinkage and cooling of matter.

These four stages fulfil the conditions Huxley sees as distinguishing his three phases: they differ radically in all the ways he has mentioned, including their " time-relations ". The second stage is only possible on the basis of the first; atoms cannot begin to form until "subatomic particles" are in being; and so on for the other stages. The important fact is that at each of these four stages—indeed, all seven stages—something *entirely new* comes into being.

And surely, for the same reasons, we are right in making a distinction between plants and animals as being radically different stages in the overall process of evolution. Granted, in both of them natural selection plays a major part in the mechanism of self-transformation, but in all the other ways specified by him they differ radically, in none so much as in the results produced: an animal is, unquestionably, quite a different thing from a plant.

Natural selection itself operates in radically different ways in plants and animals. In plants improvement is, as a rule, along a single direct line; in animals, on the other hand, the rule is that different improvements made independently of one another in different strains are in due course brought together in one strain. Again plants are almost entirely passive subjects of the operation of natural selection; animals take a more active part in selection.

Propagation in plants is for the most part asexual. True, there are the sex factors of both sexes in most species, but hermaphroditism is very common, and self-fertilization merely results in the offspring having only one parent, just as if propagation had been asexual. However, all plants, even the most advanced, have the potency of being fissiparious—new individuals growing from slips from the parent—propagation in such cases being truly asexual.

As against this, propagation in animals is almost exclusively sexual, propagation by fission or by budding being in use only among the protozoa and the lowest species of the metazoa. The Darwinian law holds good whether a species propagates asexually or sexually, but sexual propagation *makes for speedier development of useful characteristics.* This is easily seen by way of an analogy: where the law applies which excludes women from holding territory, inheritance is along a single line, each successor inheriting only what his father had himself inherited or acquired. On the other hand, where both men and women can hold territory and transmit to a common successor, it is possible by dynastic matings in successive generations to gather many inheritances, plus acquisitions, into a single holding.

In nature such matings are haphazard. All the same, they result in differences of fitness among individual members of a species, and these differences tell in a crisis. Of the premises from which the Darwinian law is deduced the first is: " Every group of organisms tends to multiply beyond the means of subsistence ". As thus stated, the implication seems to be that the means of subsistence is a *constant*, and that the size of the group, which always tends to increase, is trimmed by natural selection to that constant. But, if the evolution of animals had depended entirely on that, it would have been even slower, far slower, than it has been. Actually, the means of subsistence—which, remember, consists of, not only food, but also livable space and conditions—far from being a constant, varies considerably, sometimes shrinking suddenly and drastically as the result of, say, a bitterly cold winter, a drought, a flood, a running short of the plants or animals which constitute the food of the species under consideration. It is then that the elimination of the unfit of the species is most ruthless, only the fittest surviving, those that had, as a result of dynastic matings of their ancestors, become possessors of several survival factors, every one of which proved, in the crisis, indispensable to their survival. See what happened during the arctic winter which gripped Europe for 2½ months in 1962-3, when large numbers of animals and birds perished. The survivors among the foxes were those which, with a keener scent and more energy than normal in the species, smelt out and dug down to sheep and other animals that had been frozen under. As a result, succeeding generations of those foxes would have a larger proportion of very keen-scented and very energetic members than if the crisis had never occurred.

Darwin appears to have been looking at evolution as taking place in a species as a whole, improvements being made one at a time in the whole species. He certainly never drew attention to the much greater advantage sexual reproduction has, as compared with asexual. His main concern was to knock the bottom out of the belief, then universal, that every species of animal and plant was a special creation —and, indeed, human understanding of life took an epoch-making step forward as a result of his work. But it was left to Mendel to demonstrate by experiment—Darwin never experimented—the great advantage of sexual reproduction. He thus laid the foundation of the science of genetics and furnished a light for breeders of all species, botanical as well as zoological, to work by. It is indeed by a succession of dynastic matings that they produce strains possessing all the desirable characteristics of the species that can be made compatible in a single holding.

A breeder of a strain, in promoting its development, depends chiefly on such *males* as have the desirable characteristics, since a male's progeny can be as numerous as the breeder wants, whereas a female cannot have more offspring than she can personally bear. By using for breeding purposes only those males that best embody the required characteristics, the breeder advances the development of a strain faster than if all the males were allowed to breed. So we see that evolution, which had been helped forward by sexual reproduction, is given another boost by man when he uses, for breeding purposes, only selected males.

Nature, although working more slowly, also employs, in its work of pushing forward the evolution of a species, the same principle of selectivity as between the males to reproduce the species, the selection being done by competition among the males. Competition does not necessarily involve conflict between them: with Argus pheasants, for example, the selection is done by the hens.

> **Argus pheasants are promiscuously polygamous. A successful male may succeed in mating with half a dozen hens, while some of his less successful rivals may secure no mates at all. The display of the males helps to stimulate the females and induce readiness to mate, so any improvement in its beauty and its stimulating qualities will be at a very high premium.**
>
> **Huxley: *op. cit.*, p. 54.**

The result is that that improvement is spread wider over the next generation than if there had been no selectivity as between the males. Incidentally, as there is no competition between females of bird and animal species to be propagators, the cumulative result has been that in almost all species, other than the human, the females have not evolved an attractiveness of appearance as great as that seen in the males.

But competition between the males—for mates, for territory, and, in the case of gregarious species, for exclusive mating rights with the females of the herd—does commonly involve physical conflict between them. We are sometimes surprised to witness the intrepidity, the fierceness and the tenacity with which two males of the same species battle it out between themselves, even two cock robins disputing territorial rights in a well-situated hedge. But, remembering that the victor will be the one with just that little extra of those fighting qualities, and that, in securing that hedge, he has a better chance than the vanquished of fathering a brood in favourable conditions, it is easy to see how his victory, coupled with the defeat of the poorer qualified, better insures the possession in time of his qualities as normal characteristics of the species. This is especially true of gregarious species in which a victorious stag or bull seal, in mating with most of the does or cow seals, and fathering as many members of the next generation, spreads his qualities over most of it.

Selectivity as between the males of a species to be the propagators of the next generation is more intensive in warm-blooded creatures—mammals and birds—than in the cold-blooded species, and is one important factor contributing to their faster tempo of evolution.

However, an upper limit is set to the numerical strength of that generation by the number of *females* of this generation to produce it. So, whereas the males of a species are especially valuable in spreading evolutionary gains widely over the species, the females are especially valuable in maintaining its continuity. In a crisis, when very many of the species are bound to perish, its continuity in as large numbers as possible requires that the survivors should include a disproportionately large number of females. If at the same time only the best of the males survive, the result will be that the next generation will be as nearly as large as, and as much an improvement on, the pre-crisis generation as possible.

The females of warm-blooded species are especially valuable also in maintaining the evolutionary standards of the species. A most important factor contributing to the faster tempo of evolution in those species is parental care of the young. The obvious advantages of this are that the immature are given protection and are relieved of the responsibility of obtaining their own food. But there is another and, from the evolutionary standpoint, a more valuable advantage. We shall see that in man the psycho-social mechanism plays an increasingly greater part than heredity in helping forward human evolution. But we have the beginnings of this mechanism in mammals and birds. Their survival skills are not acquired entirely as inherited instincts. What may be regarded as the virtuosity of such skills is acquired by learning as young animals from their elders. Young wolves acquire their doggedness and the fine points of their team spirit more by learning from their elders than by heredity. In some species the mothers actually *teach* their young. They encourage them to attempt to do things essential to their survival, showing them how to do them. Mother seals teach their pups to swim; mother birds teach their fledglings to fly; and all mammal and bird mothers teach their young to obtain food for themselves and what dangers to be on their guard against. Although the training given is, by human standards, very elementary indeed, it enables the youngsters to get that start in life which makes all the difference between success and failure.

How does all this apply to the species, *homo sapiens?* How, as remarked already, the psycho-social mechanism becomes of ever greater importance in human conditions in promoting the evolution of the individual and the community, and the genetic mechanism tends ever more to " take a back seat ". It does not *decline*: a human still acquires genetically from his progenitors quite as much as animals do from theirs, but, with the development of the psycho-social mechanism, that is, with the family becoming ever better as an institution, with the language of the community becoming ever better developed as a medium for transmitting cultures, and with the facilities for learning provided by the community—we shall see that these consist of far more than strictly educational institutions—becoming ever better and more extensive, it becomes ever easier for the individual, provided he has the will and capacity to learn, to make ever greater intellectual and moral gains *as an individual.*

In any case, intellectual and moral worth are not transmissible genetically. True, the sons of a genius would have some of that genius rub off on to them, but only by way of the psycho-social mechanism, that is, by *learning* from him, not genetically. If cut off from him in infancy, they would be in no better position than some of the average people. The son of even the Lord Buddha, Prince Rahula, whom the Buddha left as an infant with his mother when He went out into the wilderness to think out the problem of life, grew up to be a very ordinary person. The Master K. H. has remarked: " Plato and Confucius were fifth round men and our Lord [Buddha] a sixth round man. . . . and not even Gautama Buddha's son was anything but a fourth round man". (*ML.* 83). So the special value of the males of the species in spreading evolutionary gains *genetically* over large sections of the next generation is very greatly reduced in the human species as the evolutionary gains become more and more spiritual and so cannot by their very nature be transmitted genetically.

In a highly advanced community, men possessed of most valuable qualities are commonly childless, and this is not regarded as damaging to the community.

But, whereas human progress no longer depends on the genetic mechanism, the continuity of a human society does, and always will as long as the only way by which a human can come into being still continues to be by birth to a woman. "Save the women and children first" remains as sound a rule when applied to a human community in a crisis as its equivalent would be in application to any other species. A nation at war is wise to take special measures to safeguard its women and children. It may be remarked here—although it relates to the males of the species—that, whereas, when a crisis strikes an animal species, it is the unfit that perish, in a war between humans it is generally the fittest of a nation's young manhood that are sacrificed. That is the tragedy of it.

So—to return to pre-human evolution—natural selection, made operative by the limited life spans of plants and animals, and accelerated, first by sexual propagation, and further, in animals, by selectivity as between males to do most of the propagation, operates to make evolution advance faster and towards a greater fulness than it would have done otherwise.

It is thus that a whole species comes to possess highly efficient potencies which enable its members to surmount the dangers to their survival in their particular habitat. Tigers, for example, living in dense jungle and preying on animals which have very efficient powers of hearing, scent and sight, and are very nimble in getting away at the first alarm, have developed, among other potencies, self-reliance—characteristics of all cats, the fruits of their habit of hunting singly—stealth in approaching their prey unobserved; agility in springing suddenly on it from quite a distance; and strength of limb and mouth in seizing and holding it.

On the other hand, wolves, whose habitat is somewhat more open, have developed the technique of hunting in groups, even packs, pursuing their prey relentlessly until it is worn out and, brought to bay, is worried to its death. They—and other members of the dog family—possess, as their potencies, doggedness and staying power, team spirit and a sense of discipline—the last two manifesting in an instinctive tendency to subordinate their efforts to a common purpose.

These are but two families of animals. Others evolve their own special survival potencies: alertness (a hair-trigger attentiveness to every out-of-the-ordinary sound, scent or sight); curiosity (intensive focussing by an animal of all its faculties of perception on anything strange that it has become aware of in its surroundings); movelessness in hiding; nimbleness in making off at the first alarm; all-out speed in flight; readiness and courage in coming to grips with an intruder; all-out effort in combat; togetherness of gregarious animals; and many others.

All these potencies that are developed in animalhood are taken by the ego into humanhood as built-in character, with some outstanding in him according to the animal species from which he has emerged. Humanity is a river into which all the streams of animal life flow. The waters of the stream, however, do not get mixed up and become homogeneous, but retain their identities and their distinctive characters. If anything, the characters of individual humans become even more distinctive. Human life, being more complex than that of animals, there is a tendency towards distribution of functions and mutual exchange of services, each individual tending to specialize in the function for which he is best fitted KARMICALLY, that is, because of what he does by force of habit engendered in the immemorial past stretching back through animalhood. This specialization causes these abilities to go on developing in him and so causes his particular character to become ever more distinctive. So, although all humans belong to the one biological species, the diversity of characters among individuals is quite as great as in all other animal species put together.

Division of labour and the mutual exchange of services create the need to be able to communicate increasingly complex ideas, and this fosters the development of language. With animals and birds the need to communicate is not extensive, and their *sound* languages consist of little more than alarm and mating calls; calls between parents and young to identify each other and bring them together; and calls by the young for food. Feelings and thoughts which are at all complex have to be communicated by signs and behaviour: we have only to think of how our own dogs and cats make known *by actions* their wants and their intentions to one another and to us—think of a dog rolling over on to its back to indicate submission. Bees are found to have evolved quite an elaborate dance language. However:

> **The language of bees is a wonderful product of evolution; but in comparison with any human language it is as elementary as . . . . a primitive abacus as compared with an electronic calculating machine. . . . Human language is not merely a collection of words, but an elaborate technique. It is in fact the most complicated kind of skill in existence.**
>
> **Sir Julian Huxley: *Evolution in Action*, p. 114.**

Both speaker *and hearer* show this skill, an essential part of which is the exclusively human faculty of IMAGINATION, being able to make mental pictures of things in their absence.

Man is the only organism to be able to think of things in their absence, or at any rate to do so effectively and habitually. He alone possesses the faculty of imagination, or can grasp, in a single act of experience, partly subconscious and partly conscious, a complex situation involving facts and ideas, emotions and judgements, the past and the present and the imagined future.

***ibid.*, pp. 113-4.**

The word, "imagination", is used here, not in the popular sense of fancying something to exist which does not actually have being, but in the sense in which it is used by psychologists—which is in fact its proper, radical meaning—the making of thought *images* of things in their absence, as distinct from "percepts", thought pictures formed in perceiving anything present.

Remembering involves the ability to make restorations of perceptual pictures which had earlier been on the canvas of consciousness and have since faded out. Man, and man alone, can—and habitually does—make such restorations on a canvas that has become completely blank. And he alone can, and does, make them *at will*. They may be neither accurate nor complete as restorations, but are generally sufficiently so to serve their purpose.

We hear a lot of exaggerated talk about the astonishing memories of animals, of dogs in particular remembering a former master after many years of separation. But our astonishment is due simply to our not having expected it. When a human friend remembers one after an equally long separation, one takes it for granted and finds nothing in it to astonish one. But animals cannot remember at will, because they cannot make a memory picture on a blank canvas. It is only when they have a perceptual picture on the canvas of their consciousness that their memories make additions to it.

The truth of the following observation by the Master K. H. is incontestable: " A dog remembers that his master thrashed him when the latter gets hold of his stick—at all other times he has no remembrance of it ". (*ML.* 170)

Wealth of imagination and wealth of language develop side by side and interdependently: a language rich in words and expressions for an extensive range of ideas is developed by, and develops, an extensive and varied skill in imagination or ideation. The richer a language and the richer the skill in ideation of the people using that language, the easier is the transmissibility of cultures among them.

The faculty of ideation allows of the uniquely and characteristically human faculty of REASON—which involves the ability to hold mental images for long periods in the mind, concentration—and of another very valuable and uniquely human faculty, that of *creative* thinking, being able to make mental pictures of things *that have not yet been*, " the imagined future ".

This in turn makes it possible for man to have a CONSCIOUS PURPOSE. In order to get the full measure of man, it is essential to understand clearly the fundamental difference this makes as between animals and humans. We find animals manifesting outstandingly efficient qualities which enable them to survive—alertness, speed, cunning, and so on—and we tend to think, if we allow ourselves to do so in human terms, that these qualities are purposed: that the tiger, when it has leisure to think over the technique of its hunting, makes up its mind to be as stealthy as possible; that the deer, grazing with the herd, gets to thinking about what it would do if a tiger were to appear, and resolves, if that were to happen, to run as fast as it possibly can. But in truth it is only when a tiger is actually stalking its prey that it is filled with a strong *instinctive* urge (*kama*) to be as stealthy as it can; it is only when a deer actually starts to run that it is pressed by an intense *instinctive* urge (*kama* again) to do so at top speed. At no other time does stealth enter the mind of the one, or all-out speed that of the other. Indeed it does not do so even then, just as a man may find himself running at panic speed without meaning to, or even having realized till then that he was doing so.

> Till I' eard a beggar squealin' out for quarter as 'e ran,
> An' I thought I knew the voice an'—it was me!
>
> KIPLING

Kama, pure and simple, without Manas acting at all. These two karmas, manifesting as instincts in these two species of animals, are entirely the product of natural selection, not purpose. The *individual* animal does not become more stealthy or more speedy. Only the *species*.

A man, on the other hand, can, by means of the uniquely human faculties we have been looking at, faculties which go to make up his Higher Manas, form in his mind a concept of stealth or speed or any other abstract quality; he can appreciate its importance; he can imagine himself possessing and using it; and he can resolve, bend his will purposefully, to do so in " the imagined future ". Or he can, using these same uniquely human faculties, bring about the development of such a quality in *another* person or even an animal, that is, train him or it to be more stealthy or more speedy or more whatever. Incidentally, it is only when trained by a human that an individual animal—as distinct from the species—makes evolutionary gains, thus providing an exception to the rule given at the end of the preceding paragraph.

Man has long used for his own benefit—exploited, if you prefer that word—the potencies that he finds in animals: the strength of elephants; the speed of horses; the alertness and aggressiveness of dogs in taking on intruders; and so on. When he does so, he trains the animal to use its potency in his service and at the same time trains it in such a way as to develop its potency still further.

And so something entirely new—in fact three things—enter into the experience of the ego while still in animalhood; (1) as already noticed, the making of evolutionary gains as an individual and in a way that is independent of the genetic mechanism; (2) a spirit of service, which goes hand in hand with its indispensable complement, namely, (3) a consciousness of its potency and of its being esteemed by others. In the animal the last two are only germinal, but are nevertheless at times clearly discernible, as when, for example, a sheepdog manifests a perceptible zest in using its fine qualities in the service of the shepherd and appears to have a dawning sense of their being appreciated; or when a horse, more commonly a circus horse, displays a pride in putting its best foot forward in support of its master and also seems to have a sense of its fine qualities being held in esteem.

This is in contrast to the animal in the wild, which uses its potencies for its own benefit only and sees them—in so far as it is conscious of them at all—as not being to the liking of others. Why, even among humans, one person's firmness may be looked on by others as inflexibility, his adaptability as instability, his trustfulness as gullibility, his thrift as niggardliness, and even his active solicitude for the needy may be sneered at as "do-gooding". It all depends on whether the looker-on sees the quality as being employed by him to serve his own ends or not.

The general trend during humanhood is for these three things—evolutionary advance as an individual, a spirit of service, and a consciousness of the potencies that one possesses and of their being to the liking of others—to go on developing. In course of time, when they have become well-developed, they produce a revolution in the ego's evolutionary progress, the effect of which is that the ego takes upon himself the purposing and managing of his own evolution and, later and increasingly, that of others, including not only other humans but also animals and plants.

This revolution, which takes place in the course of an ego's evolution, regarded as a whole, also takes place, by recapitulation, in the course of every life he lives on earth. It is due to someone else's training—his mother's to begin with—that, as a child, he makes his first cultural gains. These may also be the cultural gains that most deeply affect him in life. What are known as " home influences " or " family background " form an important part of the psycho-social mechanism. It has already been remarked that parental care of the young, distinguishing the warm-blooded species from those preceding them, is a potent factor in promoting their evolution. Now, in no species is parental care so profound, so extensive, or so long in duration as in the human —" extensive " in that it is not just a matter of caring for the physical well-being of the child, but also his intellectual and moral development. Parental love—and this means for the most part mother love—is a priceless jewel possessed by all warm-blooded species, but most especially, the human. It operates when the growing child is most impressionable and when his association with other humans—his mother especially, but also his brothers and sisters and his father—is particularly close and continuous. There is a tendency at the present day for some mothers to abdicate their responsibilities in this matter for fear of "indoctrinating" their children. But that is a mistake. Until a child's Atma-Buddhi have got working in this incarnation, that is, until he has developed a purposefulness in life and experience of it, he is dependent on his mother to provide them for him. And she, in fulfilling her obligations, benefits herself as much as her child. In taking pains to ascertain what is fundamentally right in the guidance she gives him, leading him to adopt purposes and objectives for him to aim at, and instructing him in truths he ought to know, she is all the time making all these things so much the more a part of her own being.

As we are on the subject of the human family as an invaluable part of the psycho-social mechanism, it is apposite to remark—before returning to our growing child—that the mechanism operates, not only as between parents and children, but also as between husband and wife, whether or not they have children. Normally, the person with whom one has the longest and most intimate association during the course of one's life is one's spouse. Hence, it is between husband and wife that there is normally a fuller exchange of intellectual and spiritual worth than any that either has with any other person during life. The result is that, in the course of years, they come to resemble each other, not only in their interests and their stock of knowledge, but also, incredibly, sometimes even in their physical appearance. What may be called the common end-product is not an average, but an aggregate, of the two individuals as they were before marriage, both of them, during their long years of companionship, enriching their own respective qualities with something learnt from the other.

The growing child—to return at last to him—makes further evolutionary gains from his teachers and instructors in school and college. But gradually, in the course of all this, he comes to envisage the objective towards which it is all leading, and takes a more active part in purposing his own intellectual and spiritual development, generally co-operating with his parents and teachers, thus making the transmission of cultures to him so very much easier.

That brings us to an outstanding feature of an advanced community, the vast network of facilities for the transmission of cultures, a network which we find to be ever more complex and extensive, the more cultured the community that we are looking at. Merely to name them all would be an effort. Schools, colleges, technical institutes and universities spring first to mind; then we have the press with its vast output of books and periodicals; radio and television, libraries, art galleries, museums of all kinds, zoos, botanical gardens; art in all its forms; the theatre and cinema; churches and all manner of societies for transmitting specific cultures.

The cultures absorbed by way of all these media are not only passive, but active as well: " cumulative experience " as well as " conscious purpose ". One naturally tends to think that, with all these cultural facilities available in equal degree to all the members of the community, they would all become identical, with exactly the same cumulative experience and the same purposes. The truth is they do nothing of the kind. This is because the transmissibility of cultures depends, not only upon the cultural facilities available, but also upon the will and capacity of the individual to learn, to change his nature.

Look how very differently people have been affected by the wide publicity given to the Report of the Royal College of Physicians, which stated unequivocally that cigarette smoking was a cause of lung cancer and bronchitis. While

A, as a result, promptly took measures to break off the habit, B has gone on smoking in complete disregard of the warning.

Then again, the repeated appeals by the authorities to drivers not to drink *and* drive has led to X studiously avoiding drinking if he is due to drive the family home after a party; whereas Y, after celebrating at a wedding party, drove in high spirits a coachful of people into a crash, in which most of them, including the newly married couple, were hurled to a sudden death.

Some people learn some things readily; some never seem to learn anything. Mary Lutyens has remarked: "Betty and I are examples of how little environment and upbringing influence the intrinsic character of a child. We could not have been more different, although we were brought up in an identical way". (*To Be Young*, p. 20).

It is a common observation how different the characters of two people, brought up in exactly the same way in exactly the same environment, may turn out to be, each, as he grows up, setting himself his own purpose in life, each employing his own fabric of knowledge and know-how to achieve his purpose. Psychologists find this very puzzling. To account for it some of them have advanced a theory that the respective characters are due to influences that had affected the *mother* while the child was still unborn. They find themselves forced to the conclusion that the characters of people have been formed somehow *before birth* and, since the only prenatal existence they can think of anyone as having is as a foetus in his mother's womb, they—or some of them—come out with this fantastic theory.

Of course, the true explanation is that everyone of us has lived a long succession of lives, extending over millions of years, and it is during all these lives on earth—but more especially during the devachanic lives between them—that our respective characters have been slowly forming, each trait being the cumulative result of insignificant accretions, spread out over very extensive periods of time.

To understand how all this has come about, let us return to the subject of Memory. In considering Memory a little earlier we were looking at only one side of it; its passive side. But Memory has also its *active* side in that the "remembering" consists of *doing* something, or else of restraining oneself from doing something which one would ordinarily have done. It may be a simple thing like remembering to post a letter, or remembering not to cross the road without having first looked to right and left for oncoming traffic. Or it may be something of greater import, the implementation of a high resolve, such as to live a clean, healthy life, or to be always considerate of others.

In resolving to do, or not to do, anything, one sets up an inner pressure which, later on when the appropriate conditions for the fulfilment of the resolve are in being, may manifest as a sort of inner pressure towards, or in restraint of, doing, as the case may be.

On the other hand it may not. It is the same as with passive remembering. One gets to know a truth. When the occasion next arises when that truth is relevant and a knowledge of it useful, one may remember it. On the other hand one may not.

However, no piece of knowing is ever completely lost. There is a trace left in one's memory, and the likelihood is that, when once again it is brought to one's notice, one may recognize it as something one once knew. Whether one does so or not, this fresh getting-to-know will reinforce one's memory of it and increase the probability of one's remembering it in future.

The same is true of *active* remembering. No resolve is entirely lost in the void. When the occasion next arises to implement it, one may not do so; may not even remember one's earlier resolve. But, should something happen later on to make one make that resolve again, it will reinforce the earlier one, whether or not one remembers having made it, and increase the probability of one's remembering it on the next occasion and even implementing it, or at least attempting to.

Even if the resolve is never again repeated during one's earthly life, it is sure to come out again during devachanic life. The teaching is given more than once in *The Mahatma Letters* that, to quote one enunciation of it: " the ego, once reborn in the Devachan, retains for a certain time proportionate to its earth life a *complete recollection* of his Spiritual life on earth ". (*ML.* 154).

Higher up on the same page is a fuller description: " And now, the latter [Devachan] being a state determined and brought by its past life, the Ego does not fall headlong but sinks into it gradually and by easy stages. With the first dawn of that state appears that life (or rather *is once more lived over* by the Ego) from its first dawn of consciousness to its last. . . . Out of the resurrected past *nothing* remains but what the Ego has felt *spiritually*—that was evolved by and through, and lived over by the spiritual faculties—be they *love* or *hatred*". (*ML.* 184).

So *every* resolve that had at any time during one's earthly life been " felt spiritually "—cogitated and resolutely determined on—is now lived over once more in Devachan. But no other: an inclination which was merely kamic, felt in the heat of emotion and forgotten immediately afterwards takes no reappearance in Devachan.

The reader may be somewhat bewildered to read of spiritually felt *hatred*, and be puzzled to understand how that can find a place in Devachan. But hatred too may be noble and transcendental, as was the Churchillian detestation of Hitlerian evil, and his unyielding resistance to it.

To sum up, in Devachan one has a "*complete recollection*", but only of what was "felt *spiritually*". So even that one resolve, if it had been felt spiritually, reappears in Devachan —and may do so *repeatedly*. The Master, describing what happens to the Ego's faculties at death, writes: "When life has retired from the last particle in the brain matter, his perceptive faculties become extinct forever, his spiritual powers of cogitation and volition—(all these faculties in short which are neither inherent in, nor acquirable by, organic matter)—for the time being". (*ML.* 125).

This teaching—that, with the death of the physical body, the ego loses his powers of perceiving objectively all that happens on earth, or, for that matter, anywhere else— was queried by Sinnett and Hume, brought up in the Christian teaching that the departed see clearly all that goes on in Heaven and from there watch over their dear ones still on earth. But the Master categorically reaffirmed what He had said. In *The Eternal Truths of Life* I have dealt at some length with this and the objections to it.

"Extinct forever" should not be misunderstood. The ego in his next incarnation will develop new sensory faculties, but those developed in this life die forever with his body.

However, the point of the quotation relevant to our subject is that the powers of cogitation and volition are lost "for the time being" only, that is, until after rebirth in Devachan. The devachanic life is a "spiritual, purely cogitative existence, of that unalloyed felicity which, in proportion with the intensity of the feelings that *created* it, lasts from a few to several thousand years". (*ML.* 124).

This is a most absorbing subject, to which I have devoted two whole chapters in *The Eternal Truths of Life.* Take one example, as given by the Master K. H., the devachanic life of Francis Bacon: "Hence—all the great plans of moral reform, of intellectual and spiritual research into abstract principles of nature, all the divine aspirations, would, in Devachan come to fruition, and the abstract entity previously known as the great Chancellor would occupy itself in this inner world of its own preparation, living, if not quite what one would call a *conscious* existence, at least a dream of such realistic vividness that none of the life-realities could ever watch it". (*ML.* 188-9).

Dream or no dream, his faculties of cogitation and volition are all the time fully active, and he immerses himself in all the research into the abstract principles of nature which had engaged him on earth and bends his will towards the achievement of all his great plans and divine aspirations. In doing so he is all the time building up his Atma-Buddhi, the two sides of his spiritual being: the *active* side, the fabric of purposes which he commits himself to achieve; and the *passive* side, the intelligence and sagacity which he develops as the means of achieving these purposes, first, subjectively in Devachan, and then objectively in his next life on earth.

In Devachan Atma-Buddhi assimilate the spiritual essence of the lessons learnt in the previous earth life. "Manas is immortal because after every new incarnation it adds to Atma-Buddhi something of itself; and thus, assimilating itself to the Monad, shares its immortality". (*SD.* I, 264).

There is a paradoxical saying: "One learns to swim in winter and to skate in summer". The explanation is this:

A youngster, learning to execute a particular dive, goes on trying till the water in the pool gets too cold. Then he has to hold off all through the winter. But, during that time he will, again and again, do that dive ideally. "Ideally" in both senses of the word: it will be executed perfectly; but only in his *imagination* in a subjective pool. However, as every student of Psychology learns, that "shadow diving" has the effect of his assimilating into his being the technique of the dive. Summer comes round again and sees him back at the pool, peeling off his clothes, eager to dive in real water. And, *mirabile dictu*, he does it splendidly, surprisingly better than he had ever done it in the preceding summer. He had learnt it during all these months that he had spent *away from* the objective pool. In the same way, in all our shadow activities in Devachan, away from objective life on earth, we learn to live that earth life better.

The important fact to bear in mind is that, although the ego's devachanic world is entirely imaginary, *the ego himself is real*, and the effects of his devachanic dreams upon him are also real—and lasting. Devachanic life constitutes an invaluable part of the mechanism of a man's evolution. Man alone can avail himself of it, because he alone has the faculty of imagination, he alone has conscious purposes and he alone has the intelligence necessary to their achievement. These two parts of his being, his Atma-Buddhi, take many, many lives to mature.

Now we see why A readily gives up smoking when he gets to know of its deleterious effects on health; why X studiously avoids drinking if he is due to drive—so different to B and Y respectively. Among the purposes which A has not only acquired but also, through earthly and devachanic lives, assimilated into his Atma is that of clean and healthy living;

similarly X has in his Atma a well-established and fully integrated purpose of consideration for others.

Well, that seems to explain the great differences in responsiveness by different members of a community to the transmissible cultures available equally to all. But we still have to find an explanation for the genius of a Shakespeare or a Churchill, a Newton or a Nelson, a genius that *transcends* all the cultural facilities which they could possibly have drawn upon. Where does it come from? Fortunately, one of them has left us a description of the processes which produced his flashes of genius—the expression is mine, not his. Churchill tells us that, when he had a perplexing problem, he would marshal in his mind all the relevant facts and considerations and hold them firmly there while concentrating all his intellectual faculties on them in a supreme effort to find a solution. If, in spite of all this, he could not arrive at one, he would put the problem out of his mind, leaving it to "cook" in his subconscious. Some time later on he would take up the problem again and give it the same intensive study. If still no solution was forthcoming, he would again let it return to the subconscious to continue cooking. He might repeat all this several times (but he found that it did not pay to go *worrying* it). Then, when he was thinking of something quite different or of nothing in particular, a breath-taking solution would suddenly flash into his mind, surprisingly clear, and his being would make an invaluable gain, coming to him seemingly out of nowhere.

Of course, the same sort of thing is experienced by countless people who make no pretensions to be Churchills. The point is that we have here a process of evolutionary gain which is independent of, not only the genetic mechanism, but even the mechanism of "transmissible cultures" envisaged by Huxley, and we are left wondering what the mysterious source could be from which it emanates.

And it is not only the *passive* side of a person's genius—his intelligence and know-how—that makes gains from this mysterious source. The *active* side also—the fabric of intents and purposes which he takes on and which *become a part of himself*—sees on making extensions in the same way. For example: A person who loves and plays music has often wished that a particular theme, dear to his heart, had been made the subject of a musical composition, providing him with the "wording" of the message that he is longing to give his listeners. The thought enters his mind that he might do the composing himself, but, never having done musical creation before, he shrinks from attempting it now. All the same, he has a sense of a "voice" urging him to undertake it, breathing into him a confidence in himself and a fire for the venture. After some hesitation he takes the plunge and starts making the unaccustomed efforts, thus adding a fresh purpose to his life. Besides striving to interpret the music of other composers and convey their messages, he now takes up composing meaningful music himself.

This example has been given by me in earlier chapters of this book, "Buddhi, the Wonder working Female Principle" and "The Eternal Logos". It is unnecessary to repeat all that was said in them. Suffice it to say that the source from which the "voice" proceeds, called variously Parabrahm, Ain Suph, Hermes, and other names, is the Universal Atma-Buddhi, the aggregation of all the purposings and of all the know-how of all the Dhyan Chohans and all other thinking beings that ever were, all preserved in Akasha, the eternal element, of which the Master M. writes:

> **You will easily understand what is meant by the "one and only" element or principle in the universe and that *androgynous*; the seven-headed serpent *Ananta* of Vishnu, the *Nag* around Buddha —the great dragon eternity biting with its *active* head its *passive* tail, from the emanations of which spring worlds, beings and things.**
>
> ***ML.* 72-3**

"Androgynous" means "male-female" or, more accurately, "manly-womanly". Theosophists are familiar with the symbol of a serpent with its tail in its mouth, commonly spoken of as "swallowing its tail". But, actually, the symbolism envisages it as *biting* its tail, the manly head biting the womanly tail; Atma, the male aspect of the Monad, biting Buddhi, the female aspect, evoking from it what it has purposed. "Biting" suggests something sharp and painful that pricks one into action. The word is apt. Our musician, in purposing composition, bites his musicianship, all his musical knowledge and his know-how as instrumentalist, and gradually and painfully evokes from it the composition he had purposed.

Now music, expression in sound of great spiritual emotions, is part of the great fabric of purposes of Parabrahm. When our musician contemplates musical creation, he unknowingly puts himself *en rapport* with IT, and the playback into his consciousness is the "voice". In listening and giving heed to the "voice", he makes himself an agent of Parabrahm. Huxley has written:

> **In the light of evolutionary biology man can now see himself as the sole agent of further evolutionary advance on this planet, and one of the few possible instruments of progress in the universe at large. He finds himself in the unexpected position of business manager for the cosmic process of evolution.**
>
> ***op. cit.*, p. 139.**

In my mind's eye I see Sir Julian whistling and gazing at the landscape, trying to look as if he doesn't know that he has raised a question which is shrieking for an answer, but which he has coolly ignored. Who is the employer that man is sole agent for, the user of man as an instrument, the director that man is business manager for? And yet the question is answered clearly and without equivocation, by Occult Science. The employer-user-director is Parabrahm. In so far as any man makes any such purpose his own, bending his resolution to its achievement, he makes his Atma in the likeness of the global Atma. The choice is free: our musician was quite free to accept or decline the responsibility of being a composer, but, in taking it on, he identifies himself with IT. In so far as he evolves the know-how of musical composition, the vehicle for achieving that purpose, making it in the likeness of the global know-how in that field, he makes his Buddhi in the likeness of the Universal Buddhi. It is written: " So God created man in his own image ". (*Genesis*, I, 27). It would be truer to say that man *makes himself* in the image of Parabrahm. It is his *spiritual* being, not his physical body, that gradually becomes one with the Universal.

> **Withal, the Monad of every living being. . . .** ***is an individual Dhyan Chohan distinct from others, with a kind of spiritual Individuality of its own,*** **during one special Manvantara. Its Primary, the Spirit (Atma), is one, of course, with the One Universal Spirit (Paramatma), but the Vehicle (Vahan) it is enshrined in, the Buddhi, is part and parcel of that Dhyan-Chohanic Essence.**
>
> ***SD.* I, 285.**

The dual "Dhyan-Chohanic Essence" is the androgynous principle mentioned by the Master M., symbolized by " the seven-headed serpent of Vishnu ". This symbol is very commonly found in Hindu art. One example, a

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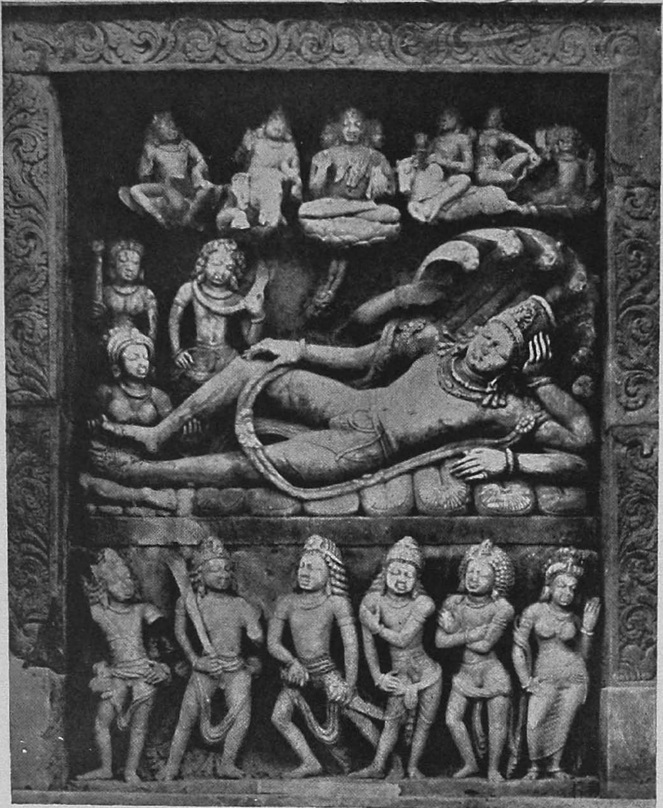


VISHNU ANANTASHAIYIN

Vishnu (from "vish", meaning "to serve") symbolizes the spirit of creative service which develops in man as "the Light of the Logos is awakened in him" (*Secret Doctrine*, II, 45, 3rd ed.) and as he responds to this influence from the Universal Spirit of service which is eternally present in Akasha ("*Ananta*" means "unending", "eternal"), but is dormant and unmanifest until it manifests in man—and this is the only manifestation of it in the objective world. The garland (*mala*), without beginning or end, on the shoulders and lap of the figure, also symbolizes the eternal. The many heads of the serpent are intended to represent the innumerable ways in which a man may serve his fellow-creatures. Lakshmi (the word means "honour", "glory") stroking the feet of Vishnu symbolizes that being honoured for such service—whether in anticipation or in realization—stirs man to ever greater service. The central figure at the top is the four-faced Brahma, seated on a lotus.

relief from the Desāvatāra Temple at Deogarh, is shown in the accompanying plate. Vishnu is shown asleep on a many-headed serpent, which is itself floating on water. As Heinrich Zimmer has remarked in *The Art of Indian Asia,* all three represent the same thing. They do so collectively as they symbolize different truths regarding Parabrahm. The water symbolizes Akasha—even Western scientists speak of the "ocean" of intergalactic matter—which is eternal ("ananta" means "unending"). Vishnu (from "vish", meaning "to serve") in humanish form ("humanish", not human, seeing that it has four arms) symbolizes the spirit of creative service that develops in man and takes many directions, represented by the many heads of the serpent.

The central figure at the top is the four-faced Brahma (from "brih" meaning "to expand") symbolizing expansionism, self-extension. self-betterment. It may be argued, quite justifiably, that no organisms other than man, not even animals, *purpose* self-extension. But, undeniably, they are motivated in everything they do by the compelling instinct of self-preservation. And self-preservation is one aspect of self-extension—extension in time. In any case. this compelling instinct *brings about* self-extension as a result, the organism, as a species, developing, by the operation of natural selection, ever better potencies which make it better able to maintain self-preservation.

These potencies fall into four groups (the four aspects or faces of Brahma). Self-betterment consists of the development of (1) *consciousness* and the perceptive faculties; (2) *kama* (not karma), readiness and intensity of the *emotional* reaction, the animal instantly taking the course that makes for self-preservation; (3) *strength,* physical and moral, enabling it to push its will to fulfilment; (4) *skills*, the ability to do efficiently what is necessary to survival.

Brahma is shown seated on a lotus, the stalk of which, passing between the legs, and over the upper part of the left thigh, of Vishnu, connects with its navel as an umbilical cord. This symbolizes a most important truth: that Vishnu derives its potencies from Brahma.

> **Therein Brahma is the cause of the potencies that are to be generated subsequently for the work of "creation". For instance, in the *Vishu Purana*, the translation: "and from him proceed the potencies to be created, after they have become the real cause", would perhaps be more correctly rendered, "and from IT proceed the potencies that *will create* as they *become* the real cause [on the material plane].**
>
> ***SD*. I, 85.**

Notice that H. P. B. stresses that Brahma must be spoken of as "IT", not "him". Vishnu too is IT, and so also is Shiva. Brahma is not a being, but this primal urge of expansionism. In Theosophical literature it has been called "the first outpouring". But "outpouring" can be misleading. The Master K. H. speaks of it as "this 'force' so-called", showing that He is not quite happy about the use of the word, "force", either: it implies something acting from without, whereas the primal urge acts always *from within*. (*ML*. 88). Perhaps it might best be called simply "the primal urge".

We may, as humans, sometimes look askance at it, but it is thanks to this impulsive urge *alone* that the Monad progresses through all the prehuman stages to humanhood, and —"The Monad has to pass through the mineral, vegetable and animal forms, before the Light of the Logos is awakened in the animal man". (*SD*. II, 45).

The expression, " animal man " is pregnant with meaning. Until the light of the Logos is awakened in the Monad, the entity is no better than an animal, although it may be in human form. It is not a grown-up, but only a child in evolution.

Then at what point precisely can the light of the Logos be said to have been awakened in the Monad; at what point does the child-entity become a grown-up-entity? Let us first look at the parallel question: At what point does a child, meant *literally*, become a grown-up—not physically, but *spiritually*?

It is hard to say. It is only gradually that it dawns upon it that life does not consist entirely of taking from its parents and its elder brothers and sisters everything that it can get from them. The first streaks of the dawn may appear in the child's mind, not as a result of its own independent thinking, but when, in response to a request from its mother, it gives its help in some little way and finds that it wins mother's praise and kisses thereby. The sun may be said to have risen and shed its direct rays into the youngster's mind when, thinking things over, he comes to have a true sense of responsibility and decides to pull his weight in the work of the household.

He may regard his thinking as having been quite independent. How is he to know that the same thinking has gone through the minds of legions of young people before his time, and that all that thinking has made a recording in Akasha; that, moreover—and this is the great truth that we learn from Occult Science—when he has thoughts akin to it, that is, when his thinking gets to be on the same wavelength, he unknowingly " picks up " some of that earlier thinking?

Now this is precisely what happens with our musician when, inspired and set aglow by the mystical " voice ", he purposes musical composition. That "voice" proceeds from the global Atma-Buddhi, in which all the thinking, active and passive, of all beings that ever were on our globe have left their record. The light of the Logos has truly appeared above his horizon to shine directly into his consciousness. But it had *dawned* long before then, its light reaching him *indirectly* when, as a result of the advice and example of others, his thinking came, bit by bit, to be on the same lines.

Indirectly, but also directly in some slight degree, which gradually becomes more distinct. When he gets to thinking on the same lines, he would put himself *en rapport* to some extent with the Universal Mind and have some light enter his mind—dimly maybe—from there directly. But, as he is aware that what he thinks reflects what he *knows* others to think, he has no inkling of the other mystical source and its influence. It is only when the "voice" puts in his mind thoughts which he finds to be new and original that he has suspicions of there being a source of evolutionary advance other than those to which he has access by the use of his five perceptual senses. It is a "transmissible culture", but not of the kind that Huxley has in mind as it bypasses the five senses. We may call it a "voice" or a "light", but we neither hear the "voice" with our corporal ears, nor see the "light" with our corporal eyes.

It is a long, long road that the Monad has to travel before it will have evolved, in humanhood, the sensitivity of spirit which enables it to sense the thinking of the Logos. Moreover, in its evolution from one stage to another down the long aeons, it slowly develops, through sore trials, the potencies which it will require, in humanhood, for its creative service. Vishnu has to depend on drawing them, already well-developed and serviceable, from Brahma: a truth that is symbolized by the umbilical cord (in the Deogarh relief). Thereafter, stimulated by Lakshmi, the Monad will purposefully cultivate these potencies—intellectual, emotional, volitional and actional—to much higher degrees of perfection, but one must have something to start with as an asset that would be negotiable in the mutual exchange of services characteristic of human society.

It surely needs no long explanation to show that Lakshmi (which means "glory", "honour", commonly symbolized as a woman stroking the feet of Vishnu, as in the Deogarh relief) is the stimulant, the shakti, of Vishnu. One has only to think of all the people who are stimulated to go on striving to reach ever higher levels of public service in the expectation of glory, honour, esteem. But Lakshmi not only lures from in front: it also pushes deliciously from behind. Statesmen whose experience it has been "Th' applause of listening senates to command", producers who, having worked to build prosperity for their peoples, have known what it means—

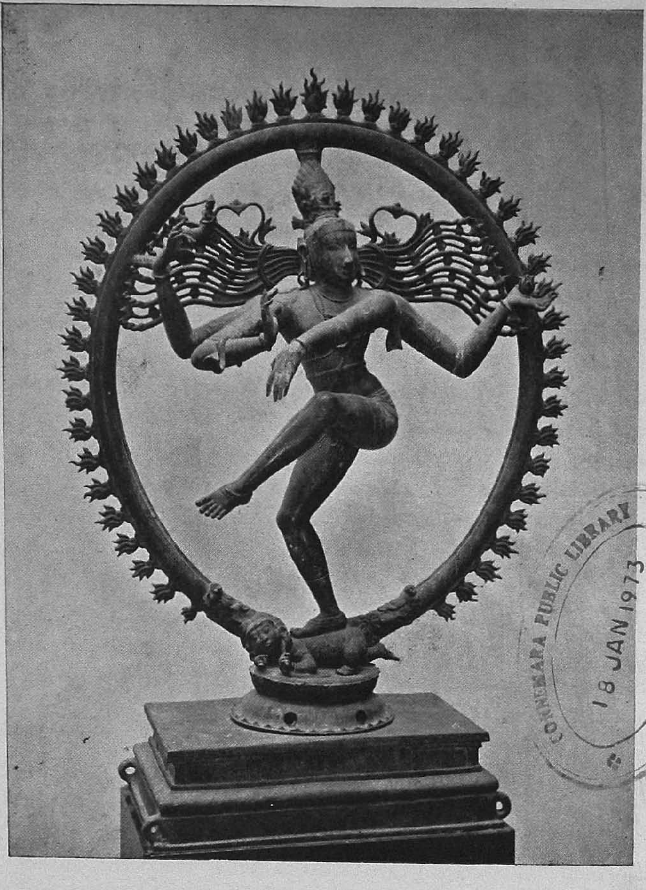
> "To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land
> And read their hist'ry in a nation's eyes",

have as a result come to know what a sweet stimulus that applause, that reading of their own History in others' eyes, has been to still greater works of service.

The influence from the Logos which has the effect of transforming the ego from a child in evolution into a grown-up with a mature sense of responsibility has been called "the second outpouring". Here again we have to be careful not to misunderstand the word, "outpouring". We must not think of it as a force that transforms the Monad from without, and *must* transform it. THERE IS NO WAY OF APPLYING FORCE TO *SPIRIT*. All that can be done is to spread an influence—or "*in*-pouring", as seen by the ego if in fact it *is* influenced by it—which is effective only when the ego, responding *from within*, aligns its thinking with it.

The choice is quite free: the ego does not *have* to conform. Many egos never conform. They remain forever "agin' the government", but are not destroyed. They take what is called in theosophy "the left-hand path", and in due course attain a sinister adeptship as "brothers of the shadow". They even reach Nirvana. Not "a long Nirvana of Bliss. . . . after which—life as a Dhyan Chohan for a whole Manvantara", but "*Avitchi Nirvana* and a Manvantara of misery and Horror as a—you *must not* hear the word nor I—pronounce or write it". (*ML.* 168). There is no way in which they can be made to *choose* the right-hand path. The pity is that such a person, having again and again in the past stretched his determination to the fullest extent of his will-power in opposition, and having thereby created a force which has become a part of himself, his inmost self, his Atma, cannot for that very reason dissociate himself from it now, or even consider doing so.

Happily, the same is equally true of those on the right-hand path. Florence Nightingale's life-purpose of giving proper care and comfort to those torn with pain from wounds suffered in war, Garibaldi's life-purpose of bringing political unity to all Italians, H. P. Blavatsky's life-purpose of carrying to the West and, indeed, to the whole world, the resplendent wisdom of the Eastern Adepts, had become so inseparable a part of each of them respectively that it carried them tirelessly through immense difficulties ever towards their objectives. And the more they labour in fields such as these, the more do



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SHIVA NATARAJA

Shiva symbolizes the spirit of self-mastery that man develops, gradually giving him control over his nature. "Shiva, the Destroyer, is the Creator and the Saviour (or Regenerator) of Spiritual Man, as he is the good gardener of Nature. He weeds out the plants, human and cosmic, and kills the passions of the physical, to call to life the perceptions of the spiritual man" (*Secret Doctrine,* I 495, 3rd ed.). The figure carries a flame in its upper left hand and is encircled by flames, symbolizing that by self-control one burns the weeds in one's nature. One establishes detachment from one's primal desires by over-coming their illusion, symbolized by the Apasmara which Shiva has under foot. In that detachment one experiences an ineffable bliss, expressed in dancing and in flourishing a *damaruka* (small drum in upper right hand). The lower right hand is held in the Abhayamudra, signifying that perfect Reassurance ("Fear not") in which one finds release from all one's instinctive fears and urges.

they find themselves carried by their Atmas into still further labour in similar fields.

We are apt to think that as the secondary self—Vishnu, the Server-self—develops, it automatically displaces the primal self, Brahma, the spirit of self-interest. It does not. Brahma, which has been the sole governing force carrying the evolution of the Monad throughout almost a whole solar Manvantara right into humanhood, is too strong to be readily displaced. But the ego, often finding his Server-self impeded by, and in conflict with, the older, lustier self, considers how he can obtain control over, and liberation from it. In doing so, he invokes, maybe unknowingly, "the third outpouring", from which develops the *third* self, the Liberator-self, Shiva, the "Destroyer". But don't misunderstand that designation.

> **Shiva, the Destroyer, is the Creator and Saviour of Spiritual Man, as he is the good gardener of Nature. He weeds out the plants, human and cosmic, and kills the passions of the physical, to call to life the perceptions of the spiritual, man.**
>
> ***SD.* I, 495.**

Shiva is commonly represented as a dancing figure, as in the accompanying plate, showing a South Indian five-foot-high bronze statue of the 13th century A.D., now in the Museum of Asiatic Art at Amsterdam. The figure is shown encircled by flames and holding a flame in the upper left hand, symbolizing the function of Shiva of burning up the weeds in one's nature. One establishes liberation from one's primal urges by mastering the Illusion—the Apasmara under Shiva's foot—from which they spring. In liberation one experiences an ineffable bliss, expressed in dancing and flourishing a damaruka (the small drum in the upper right hand). The lower right hand is held in the Abhayamudra (signalling

"Have no fear") of perfect assurance, an assurance which dissipates all anxiety and misgiving and vouchsafes setting aside one's primal urges.

The shakti of Shiva is Parvati or Durga. Both words mean "mountain". "Durga" (the radical meaning of which is "inaccessible") is the name given to the kind of mountain fastnesses such as have been selected, in the West no less than in the East, as sites for the building of impregnable strong-holds, the acme of security. We are all in quest of absolute security from suffering and tribulation. Each of us comes to realize in due course that security of this kind is to be had only in complete mastery *over oneself*, and it is this realization that stimulates one to go on trying to establish that complete understanding of, and mastery over, one's own nature, one's manas, which constitutes Adeptship.

The second is the result of the first. As the castes gradually became hereditary, the Brahmana caste, which had been intended to take in the intellectuals of the community, found more and more people in its ranks who had been slipped into it because their fathers had been Brahmanas, but who were devoid of intellect and quite incapable of interpreting or even understanding the abstruse Hindu philosophy. Thus came into being a type, the pundits, whose name has become a byword in many languages for the kind of thing described in the following passage:

> **Incomprehensibility is regarded as a virtue in India. In that unfortunate country, if you can manage to remain *not* understood, you stand a chance of reaching the pinnacle of fame. The incomprehensible is almost one with the divine; the land is littered with philosophic charlatans who capitalise the people's ignorance and attractiveness for the unknown.**
>
> **Lester Hutchinson, *Conspiracy in Meerut*, p. 34.**

Perhaps this may appear to be a gross exaggeration. But the Master K. H. has written:

> **The " Cradle Land of Arts and Creeds " swarms with unhappy beings, precariously provided for, and vexed by demagogues who have everything to gain by chicane and impudence.**
>
> ***ML.* 378.**

The essence of punditry is to confuse while affecting to simplify; to envelop a subject in a fog of grandiose, polysyllabic terms conveying nothing to the listener for the very good reason that they have little or no meaning for the pundit himself. Many of them—worst of all, the word, " karma " —have taken on debased meanings which make nonsense of Hindu philosophy. It was natural that the earlier Hindus' " anthropomorphistic conceptions of nature " should be seen in the minds of the later unintellectual Brahmanas as real beings, notwithstanding the fact that, quite patently, they were *not* anthropomorphic, but could only be described as " anthropomorphistic ". Peculiar word that! It is not to be found in any dictionary, and it is probably for that reason that the editors of the 3rd (Adyar) edition of *The Mahatma Letters* thought it advisable to alter the word to " anthropomorphic ". But in doing so they missed the whole point of the Master's having had to coin a word to convey His meaning. A figure with four faces or four arms is certainly not in *human* form, but may said to be in " humanish " form.

However, the Master's stricture is concerned with the fact that these figures, even if one has the good sense not to take them to represent real beings, *degrade* what they are intended to symbolize—among other things, the magnificent spirit of creative service and the noble spirit of self-mastery which develop in man and transfigure him out of all recognition as they develop.

Of late years there has been a notable and welcome spread of an understanding of Hindu philosophy among people all over the world who are deeply interested in the problem of life. It would be deplorably execrable if it were followed by a spread of the pooja to divinities of the Hindu pantheon, or of a trade in cheap, garish pictures of them, such as is common in India.

All the same, it is useful, and indeed most interesting, to know what these bizarre figures were intended originally to symbolize, and what the reported doings of these divinities—which often strike one as being most unedifying—were intended to allegorize. Heinrich Zimmer's two-volume book, *The Art of Indian Asia* (Pantheon Books, 1955, $ 22.50) is very comprehensive, giving, in Vol. 2—which is the fruits of extensive exploration—pictures of Hindu religious sculptures from, not only India, but all parts of the world where they are to be found, including museums in Europe and America. Vol. 1—compiled after painstaking research—contains the traditional explanations of what they are intended to symbolize. But the deeper esoteric meanings have often been missed. In an age when illiteracy was the almost universal rule and not, as today, the rare exception, these figures in stone symbolizing eternal, cardinal truths served a very useful purpose when placed in positions for all to see and be reminded of them. Today things are very different.

As the Shiva in one develops, one establishes an ever more complete understanding of, and mastery over, oneself and one's karma. In time it becomes so complete that one can set aside the *trishna* that would ordinarily have drawn one into incarnation. In doing so one establishes Nirvana. But one does not cease to be a man. On the contrary, one becomes a man-made-perfect.